

High Times



September '77

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by Ramsey Clark

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September 1977 No. 25 THE MAGAZINE OF HIGH SOCIETY

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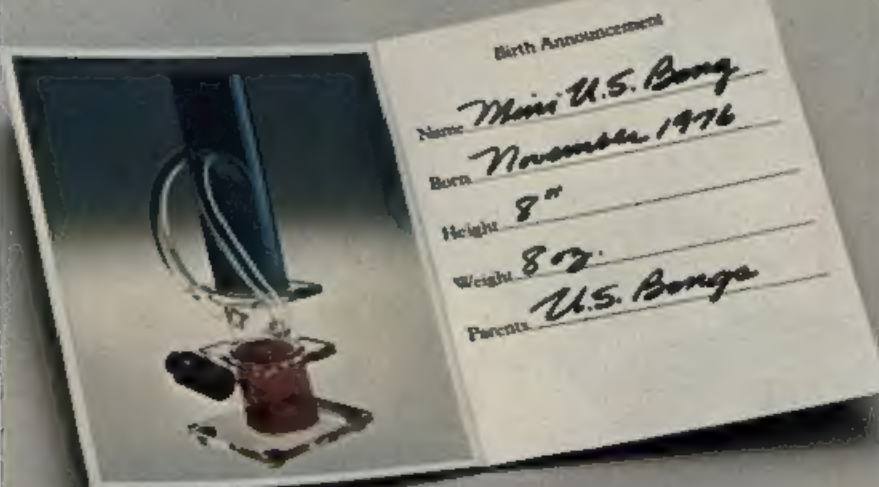
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On Abolishing Government Spying

The soul selects her own society
then shuts the door.
On that divine majority
obtrude no more. —Emily Dickinson



A government that spies on its people
considers them the enemy. They are not to
be trusted. By stealth, deception and sub-

terfuge, it will invade a citizen's sanctuary to learn what he or she thinks, says and does. Its action is then based on secret information not to be made public. That information is more often wrong than not. It comes distorted by electronic devices or other machines incapable of intelligent evaluation. The name Cosa Nostra for organized crime came from misunderstanding a wiretap. It comes from informers twisted by their Judas role, hating, self-justifying, prejudiced before their participation. Recently we have seen revealed an FBI report labeling Felix Frankfurter a great, if conservative, justice of the U.S. Supreme Court—a "dangerous man." As a young professor he defied the dean (Wigmore) of his law school and president (Lowell) of his university (Harvard) in defending the innocence of those "two waps," Sacco and Vanzetti. Roger Baldwin, modern America's stalwart defender of freedom, responded, "Yes, Frankfurter is as dangerous as the Bill of Rights." Government spying sets the government against the people, the government playing the ignoble part. Then government of, by and for the people cannot be.

If government spying necessarily damages the relationship between the people and the state, it has two even more destructive effects. It creates disbelief among people. In cases I have defended, like students indicted (those not murdered) at Kent State, the Catholic pacifists Phillip Berrigan, Elizabeth McAlister et al, and the Attica brothers, counsel becomes difficult and confidence wanes because you come to assume a government spy is in your midst. You are followed; your phone is tapped. And sadly, in each case you are proved right. Who can you trust?

Then you see the greatest human harm of all. The anguish of a young woman, hating her government and herself because it has caused her to betray the brothers of Attica who had done her no wrong, and whose wrong to society in this case was to ask to be treated as humans. You see "the experienced confidence man"—the FBI's characterization—who sought at government direction, though he failed, to entrap a Josephite priest to make violent plans and commit violent acts. And in his eyes you behold a creature who will always live by cunning, who will never commit an act of compassion or understand such an act by another. Government spying, making suspect, where not eliminating the chance for privacy, destroys the foundations of trust and self-knowledge on which individual integrity is built.

Government spying is used to prevent change and force conformity. Serving the status quo, it seeks to crush the hope for something better and different styles of life. Any inventory of pervasive government spying in America reveals its overwhelming application against people and organizations seeking nonviolent change through practices foreign and frightening to those with power: the Fifth Avenue Peace Parade, the Southern Christian Leadership Conference and its prophet of nonviolent social change, Martin Luther King, Jr., the W.E.B. DuBois Club (mistakenly believed through phonetic error to be a perversion of the Boys Club), the Socialist Workers Party, the National Organization for Women, the National Democratic Committee (perhaps only a technical change except for the chairmen), the Black Panthers.

No law has been passed designed to prevent a recurrence of Watergate. Government conduct is controlled and directed by law in a government of laws. Why not a law to control the FBI, the CIA and other intelligence agencies, to prevent government spying? Are we afraid to be free?

The American Civil Liberties Union has helped draft a bill that would prohibit government spying. It would outlaw political surveillance, selective investigation, "preventive" (disruptive) action, mail openings and covers and all wiretapping. It would strictly regulate the use of informers. It would limit all investigations to allegations of specific criminal acts where there is probably cause to believe they have been in fact committed. The proposed law would open up investigative practices to public inspection, tighten legal control over police conduct, depoliticize police functions and, finally, make violations of its provisions criminal.

It contains a large measure of the future hope for freedom in America. Any who care should enlist in its support and see to its enactment. The bill springs from the belief stated by Brandeis that the right to be let alone is "the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized men."

Ramsey Clark

Ramsey Clark, former U.S. Attorney General

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Just Ducky

This last spring produced a fresh egg in the family, which warmed the frozen



heart of grandfather Walt, and brought joy to uncle Donald, whose nephews now number Huey, Dewey, Louie and Doobie.
—Flocked Up in Florida

Yesterday's Papers Today

Your nostalgia editor ought to get hip to the present. He or she goofed on last June's "Forum" answer that stated that Cannabis Rayah hemp papers are no longer available. Not only is this brand



sold in many head shops, but San Francisco's Amorphia, the cannabis co-op, markets their own Acapulco Gold trademark, with all proceeds going toward legalization.

—Raymond Haas, San Rafael, Ca.

Kisses from Valerie

The item about me in June's "High Society" was full of errors. Two that grossly misrepresented my mentality were:

●The statement (in quotes yet) that I'm writing my next book, *Valerie Solanas*, to "dispel the notion that I am a self-promoter and that everything I do is designed to get me publicity." In one of my letters to

Majority Report, which Michael Chance supposedly quoted, I said my next book will be "a piece of self-promotion like this world has never seen. That's why I'm gonna call it *Valerie Solanas*—I call a spade a spade."

●The statement that I shot Andy Warhol because he's a male chauvinist pig. In another letter to Majority Report I denied the July 1973 Esquire report that I had referred to him as a male chauvinist pig. In addition, I didn't do all my time at Matteawan. And the Majority Report letters about me did not say "much current feminist theory is merely a Seventies repackaging of (my) curious ideas." They said, and I agree, that my work SCUM Manifesto influenced "radical" feminist "theory."

—Valerie Solanas, New York, N.Y.

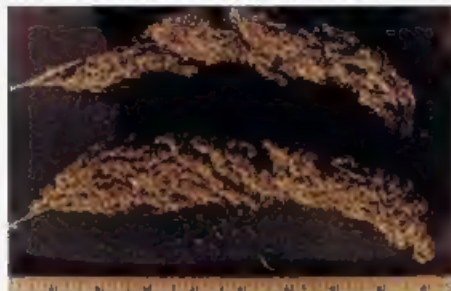
Crop Duster

For several years I have been using my Cessna 180 to spread the seeds of the evil weed over the fertile soil of Illinois. As a result, a total of five square miles of wooded areas are well-populated with boo, and their numbers are increasing annually. Third generation plants, while not on a par with their Colombian heritage, are still more potent than commercial Mexican. If such seedings were carried out nationwide, the result would be an epidemic of boo that would make government antimarijuana activities futile. If you are going to seed by air, the seeding must be done in the autumn after the leaves have turned, but before they fall.

—Johnny Muggleseed, Peoria, Ill.

State Flower, State Bud

Wyoming is better known for the Grand Tetons, but a few more harvests of incredible nine-inch buds like these and it'll



be famed for grand tokurns. Even here in Sweetwater County we can smoke the best sinsemilla of California ancestry.

—Name and address withheld

Bhang-Bhang

Here are some specifics on the guns-for-dope trade you've been reporting. In Mi-

choacan, a kilo sells for 300 to 500 pesos (\$14 to \$23). But one \$350 M-14 rifle will get you 65 keys. Here are some average prices in kilos for certain weapons: .38 special—20 kilos; .45 automatic—30 kilos; .357 revolver—25 kilos; automatic shotgun—20 kilos. You can get a ton for two or three good machine guns.

—Name and address withheld

A New ERA

The Freedom Amendment idea is great, but let's get the Equal Rights Amendment passed first. Without it, women will actually begin losing some of the rights and services they have gained in recent years. Unless women are assured equal rights under the law, all of us lose. Dope smokers will never be free till all people are free.

—Rev. David Porter Misso, Tule Lake, Ca.

Clusterbombed

Our recent trip to Mexico to pick peyote proved to be a tremendous success when we found mescalito growing in a cluster of buttons weighing 2½ pounds. The mescaline in this cluster is enough to get eight



people off, but we brought it back to O-high-o and split it among three of us to celebrate our find.

—Names and address withheld

Cruel Harvest

Reading in your May issue about the massive defoliations of the pot fields of Mexico, I couldn't help reflecting on the mass slaughtering of the whale, eagle and porpoise. My appeal is a simple one. Are we to similarly endanger the species of *Cannabis sativa* through the defoliation of fields where it otherwise grows in peace?

—Douglas Sauer, Orange, Ca.

Moonstruck

Asking for a Freedom Amendment [High Times, "Lines," May '77] is only a bit more reasonable than asking all liberty-loving people to pack their bags and form a colony on the dark side of the moon. You

say there is crime and *victimless crime*. Acts without victims are not crimes at all, and should not be discussed as such, so a constitutional change is unnecessary. All that is needed is a revision of the Federal Code. While this is also a Herculean task, it is more realistic and puts our ideas on more positive footing
 —Steve Barjenbruch, Sioux Falls, S. Dak.

Maskalito

Here are a few leaves from my portfolio, and they'll really do a job on you. A lot of sweat and that good central Texas dirt



really paid off. Been ridin' high on those buds ever since harvest!

—A. B., Austin, Tex

Who was that masked man?—Ed.

Roach Trips

I'd just like to drop everybody a hint concerning the physics of roach-toking. At the instant a joint goes out, the average temperature in the pot matrix behind the former flame front is still high enough to vaporize THC. But without an actual fire, fewer molecules are chewed up than in the chemical reaction of the flame.

Further, the stronger you inhale, the higher the vacuum you'll pull over the hot pot, evaporating more THC. Thus, a last mighty toke from a just-out roach contains more active THC than hits taken when the joint is still burning.

—Larry E. Fink, Flint, Mich

Philosopher Stoned

I used to think *High Times* would be just another *Time* magazine after everyone started smoking dope. But I've read your May issue in its entirety, and I was very impressed. I see you're becoming the most progressive magazine around, a sort of modern-day Ramparts, modeled after the Tao Te Ching. May I suggest a future cover story on Lao Tzu?

—Carlos Portela, Washington, D.C.

Rolling Home

I thought you might like to see the fruits of nine years of paper collecting. There are



231 different labels, and the collection is constantly growing.

R. Chapman-Winter, Madison, Wisc.

Freak Accident

I've been wondering about those Fabulous Furry Freak Brothers. Who are they really in real life? And how come their bus is purple one issue and yellow the next issue?

And how did you manage to put my wet dream on the June cover of your magazine for the whole world (except Canada and Greece) to see?

—C.J. Fitzsimmons, Cincinnati, Ohio

Dragracers

Recently four of us tried to establish a world record time for smoking 100 joints. We had heard that a five-person team previously did it in four hours, a record we broke. It took us two hours, 45 minutes to smoke 100 high-altitude Oaxacan joints. Needless to say, we hit a maximum high, but didn't see God.

—Leatherlungs of Lafayette, Ind

The Daily Plant

Wish this stuff really were a Colorado daily, but anyway, it sure is a Boulder



alternative. Thought you might enjoy a peek at some definitive sinsemilla that came our way.

—Jay and Steve, Boulder, Colo. ☐

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Chic of Araby

Q: On a recent Middle Eastern trip, another traveler showed me a psychedelic plant called Syrian rue, but we couldn't find a native who had ever used it. Not knowing what part to try or whether to smoke, drink or eat it, we were afraid to experiment. Do you have any information on this plant?

—Sam Halstead, Dickens, Tex.

A: Syrian rue (*Peganum harmala*) is a small, woody shrub whose seeds and roots contain harmine and harmaline, the same alkaloids found in yage. It grows on arid land in Asia, from Syria to Mongolia. There seem to be no Western accounts of its use as a high, but denizens of many countries value it as an eye medicine, aphrodisiac and relaxer. A dose of about one ounce of the seeds or dried root can be thoroughly chewed and swallowed. The active ingredients are MAO inhibitors, so you'll rue the day if you mix it with alcohol, cheese, pineapple or bananas. A dangerous blood pressure rise could ensue.

Coke and Colas

Q: I love blow, and when my nose isn't up to snuff, I roll coke 'n' weed joints. Someone told me smoking coke is a waste and won't get you high. I've always felt pretty buzzed from it, but maybe it's all in my head. What do you think?

—Yvonne P.D.R., Inglewood, Ca.

A: As many of us know, grass and coke go together like guys and dolls in their usual spliff and snuff combinations. Your friend is wrong to say you can't smoke coke. It's the primal menthol, but coca jays probably are a waste because some will go up in smoke instead of up your nose. If you ever get the chance, though, try this true connoisseur's delight—carefully inhale pure cocaine base vaporized by a flame under a piece of tin foil or a spoon.

Communing with Nature

Q: Rats in the bedroom, black air in the lungs, noise and ripoffs have finally gotten to me. I'm sick of the city and ready to move somewhere greener and cleaner, but I can't afford a country estate all to

myself. How can I locate an underpopulated commune that's right for me?

—Charlie Haverford, Detroit, Mich.

A: The only way to decide if you and the other communards are compatible is to pay an extended visit of a week or two, but nobody'll love you if you just show up without arranging your stay in advance. The April 1977 issue of *Green Revolution* (Box 3233, York, Pa. 17402) contains a valuable descriptive listing of American country communities. When you write, enclose a courtesy dollar or self-addressed stamped envelope, because many groups are otherwise too poor or swamped with mail to answer you. When you visit, bring a sleeping bag, leave pets at home and plan to pitch in with some good, honest work.

The Ego and the ID

Q: My boyfriend and I love going to bars together. The problem is, I'm only 17, and I get carded a lot. Is there any way I can get phony identification cards that work?

—Rondee Pearsall, Tampa, Fla.

A: A few companies offer birth certificate and driver's license blanks, notably Eden Press, one of our advertisers. They also



Illustrations by John Plunkett

will print you a ready-made "state ID" card. It looks official enough to pass in many situations, but because there's no specific agency mentioned, it might not get by someone who sees a lot of cards. Eden publisher Barry Reid's book, *The Paper Trip*, explains a method for getting cards through Uncle Sam without letting him know a new citizen has been created.

Strep Teaser

Q: I recently underwent penicillin treatment for a strep throat. Now, after even a few hits of weed, I have trouble breathing, tightness in my throat and chest and extremely fast heartbeat. My body temperature drops, and I get very uptight and hyper. This condition lasts 15 minutes to an hour. What's wrong, and what can I do?

—S.A., Providence, R.I.

A: The choking sensation sounds like an allergic reaction in the form of asthma. This results from a combination of a predisposing condition and precipitating

stress—like smoking. You may not have actual asthma yet, but one of these days when you light up, either the predisposing factor or other stresses will be worse than usual, and you will have a full-scale attack. Then there will be no doubt as to what is happening. I feel your drop in temperature is a warning to stop smoking now while you're ahead of the game, at least until your body has had time to regain complete health.

—Alan H. Nittler M.D.

Thankless Tusk

Q: I wonder if you can answer a question that has been bothering me for ten years now. Remember all those weird little voices at the end of "I Am the Walrus"? Are they really chanting "smoke pot, smoke pot," or is it an auditory hallucination from smoking too much pot?

—Dave Martz, East Brunswick, N.J.

A: That famous fade has had so many interpretations, it seems to reflect listeners' minds as much as the Beatles'. Different hearings have "everybody going mad (or mod), getting popped or throwing bombs, but the consensus was that they were "smoking pot." Only the walrus knows for sure, but somebody is sure to write their doctoral thesis on the problem in a few years, confusing everybody still further.

Set and Sitting

Q: When I turned 14, my mother started getting on my back about watching too much television. I only tube it three or four hours a day, so I don't know why she's nagging me all the time. She says it's addictive and will rot my brain. I tell her she's full of crap, but I don't have scientific arguments to back it up. Can you help shut her up?

—Tippy Stockton, Coconut Grove, Fla.

A: TV affects the mind in ways people seldom realize. Instant eye and ear stimulation from "turning on" is a powerful conditioning against active play or satisfaction, especially among impressionable preschool kids who form the most constant audience. Viewers of any age often enter trance states like those induced by meditation or psychedelics, with one major difference—TV satori is unconscious and filled with programming that precludes enlightenment.

The question to ask yourself is whether you're truly using it to relax, or whether it's a passive substitute for things that would improve your life.

Questions on all topics will be considered for "Forum," including all highs, sex, health, law, science, technology, music, etc. Only those of most interest can be answered. Be specific for most accurate responses. Anonymous queries are accepted. □

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by Deanne Stillman

A question a lot of people ask me these days is "Are women funnier than men?" Of course, the best reply to that is, "Only when they're having their periods"—a line I wish I thought of myself. Well, maybe it just wasn't that time of the month.

Another question a lot of people seem to have on their minds is, "Are women raunchier than men?" This question requires no joke, because the answer is simply YES.

I've recently spent some time traveling around the country, lecturing on women and humor at college campuses which are accessible only via Ozark Airlines. At the end of my lecture, it never fails that at least two or three women stand up, one after the other, and tell a joke. And not just any joke, either. Dirty jokes. Disgusting jokes. Filthy and foul jokes.

For example, during a lecture at Northwestern Missouri State University, one woman told the following joke—told it quite well, in fact. Two men in a mortuary are working with a man's body. The man is to be laid in state the next day. They are embalming him, but they realize that they have a distinct problem, his penis is erect, and they don't know what to do with it. It's so obtrusive that they can't hide it in the casket, so they decide to tie it to his leg. But as soon as they tie it to his leg, his leg comes up. They realize that won't work and decide to tie it to his stomach. When they do, the man sits up. Finally, they figure the only thing they can do is call his widow and ask her what should be done. "Cut it off and stick it in his ass," she replies without hesitation. So they cut it off and stick it up his ass. The next day, the widow comes to see her husband lying in state, and she notices a rather pained expression on his face and tiny tears streaming down his face. So she leans over the casket and says, "See, you son of a bitch, it does hurt."

This joke received a standing ovation from the women in the audience and not much of a reaction at all from the men. I guess they just can't take a joke.

Other dirty jokes that women are telling these days span the full range of the primitive to the totally elementary. Like, there's the one about the woman who walks into a bakery. Baker isn't there. She looks around in back, and the baker is crimping a pie with his false teeth. She

says, "What's the matter, don't you have a tool?" He says, "Yeah, but I'm saving it for the donuts."

Or did you hear the one about the Indian boy who wants to get laid? He goes into a brothel and tells the madam he wants a whore. She says, "You're too young. Go practice in knot-holes and come back next year." So a year goes by, and he comes back. The madam gives him a room and a whore. A few minutes later she hears weird noises and decides to look in the keyhole. The Indian's diddling the whore with a broom handle. "What are you doing?" asks the madam. "I'm checking for beehives," replies the Indian.

Well, I told you women are raunchy. And that's not the half of it. Here's a kind of earthy joke I've heard several times around the country: A young school-teacher takes her class to the monkey house at the zoo. The kids feed peanuts to the monkeys. One monkey takes each peanut, sticks it up his ass and then eats it. The school teacher is horrified and asks the zoo keeper to make the monkey stop. "I can't," he says. "Ever since someone gave him a peach, he checks everything for size."

And then there's the one about the parrot and the little old lady stranded in the middle of the ocean on a life raft. The parrot keeps shouting, "Your ass, your ass, your ass." So finally the old lady yells, "Shut up, shut up, shut up!" Parrot says, "Yeah, the salt water got mine too."

A favorite dirty joke topic among women is, naturally, cock size. Two people, according to one funny story, were dating for a long time but had never seen each other naked. Finally, they got mar-

ried. On their wedding night, the groom takes his shoes off and the bride looks down at his feet and says, "Oh my God! What happened to your toes?" He says, "I'm sorry, I forgot to tell you. When I was five years old I had toe-its." Then he takes his pants off and she says, "Oh! Look at those knees! They go halfway down your leg." He says, "Oh, I forgot to tell you. I had kneesles when I was six." Then he starts to take off his drawers and she says, "Oh! Don't tell me! When you were seven you had smallcocks!"

Not to be overlooked in this rich genre is the oft-repeated limerick:

There once was a boy from Nantucket

Whose cock was so long he could suck it.

He said with a grin,

As he wiped off his chin,

"If my ear was a cunt I could fuck it."

So why do women tell these ridiculous jokes, anyway? My theory is that women, unlike men, are concerned with the basic things in life—changing diapers, cleaning floors, scouring pots and pans, setting washers on the spin cycle, tweezing their cuticles, putting hospital corners on sheets and so on. Not to mention having babies, periods and messy affairs. The details of their lives are simply grittier than the details of men's lives. And what else do people make jokes about but their own lives?

But all seriousness aside, here's a very sweet little rhyme which all my girlfriends in high school used to recite:

Jack and Jill went up the hill,

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Media

by Gilbert Choate

James Jones, who gave us *From Here to Eternity* and *The Thin Red Line*, was a hard-drinking macho novelist who would get a few gourds of corn aboard and turn to his equally macho boon companions to say, "Whaddaya mean, you never had your cock sucked by a man?" His implication was clear and twofold: any man who hadn't explored the sexuality of men as well as women was that much less a man, and that for a small consideration he, Jones, could fix everything. Hemingway stared into his drink.

Before me lie 14 magazines of the homosexual persuasion, and my inventory is far from complete. Some of them are obviously big moneymakers, while others are clearly of considerable intellectual impact whatever one's sexual preferences, if any. There can be no doubt that a major publishing phenomenon is under way here, and those of us who remember the tension-fraught months of 1974, when we launched *High Times*, are perhaps in a unique position to appreciate it.

Never before had a legitimate magazine for a totally outcast minority, which we laughingly call "high society," been published. The gratification of producing those early issues was incredible. So this month, the 87th anniversary of the invention of flypaper, we salute our fellow joint suckers in a tribute to those high-flying magazines of the Wilde Blew Yonder.

Most visible on the gay publishing scene (as if there were any other type of publishing scene) today are the glossy bifteck magazines, not excluding *Viva* and *Playgirl*. The gloomy day has fled when you could get ten-to-life for pointing Percy at the public. Today's mutton merchants enjoy the benefits of glossy paper and huge advertising revenues, as Hefner and others have had for 25 years. And the models in many of these magazines have lost that creepy Prima Melvin quality that used to characterize the lads in Times-Square-variety smut; the men in these new mags strike your reporter as likable chaps who might just be your dentist or accountant.

Playguy (\$24 a year for 12 issues, Suite 400, 888 Seventh Ave., New York, N.Y. 10019) is the most sex-oriented of the beefcake 'zines, comparable to *Club* in its virtual exclusion of all nonsex editorial content. **Blueboy** (\$12 a year, 185 N.E.



166th St., Miami, Fla. 33162) has plenty of skin but is more service-oriented (fashion and exercise), along with cerebral stimulation that includes interviews with celebrities like Robert DeNiro (don't all swoon, guys, he's married) and John Rechy. The July issue of **ManDate** (\$14.90 for ten issues, Modernismo Publications, 155 Sixth Ave., New York, N.Y. 10013) featured the only long-haired cover boy I've detected in any of these periodicals. It is also a bit more intellectual, with features on William Burroughs, Tennessee Williams and a guy with a cobra tattooed on his ass.

Unfortunately, the leading lesbian gazettes suffer badly by comparison with their male colleagues. Where *Blueboy* offers instructive pictorials on "How to Sex Up Your Body" (don't get excited, they recommend push-ups), their sister publications feature lengthy articles on what I guess you'd call politics and other boring topics, as well as reams of bad poetry.

The discouraging conclusion I have reached is that lesbians, at least the ones who publish these items, are not into their bodies, unlike their physical-fitness-conscious fellow gays, of whom John F. Kennedy could be proud. Nonetheless, women who love women or say they do may find some cold comfort in **Dyke** (\$8 a year, quarterly, Tomato Publications, 70 Barrow St., New York, N.Y. 10014) and **The Lesbian Tide** (\$6 a year, bimonthly, ha-ha, 8855 Cattaraugus Ave., Los Angeles, Ca. 90034—the publishers feel obliged to mention that it is delivered in "plain wrapper").

The flagship of the nonexclusionist (i.e., bisexual) gay press is **Christopher Street**, a lively, nonpornographic journal of ideas and entertainment that is loosely patterned on the *New Yorker* and even prints spot cartoons, some of which are quite funny. However, where the *New Yorker*

created a style and continues to expand it, **Christopher Street** offers a tepid distillation of gay outrageousness and sensuality for those anemics who are hopelessly offended by the commercialism of the *Blueboy* variety and the vulgar but piquant cant of the inexpensively-printed lesbian magazines. It's for people who like to think that they're thinking, as Robert Warshaw said of the *New Yorker* in the Fifties (\$12.30 a year, *That New Magazine*, 80 West 13th St., New York, N.Y. 10011).

Even more intellectual are **Magnus**, a Socialist Journal of Gay Liberation (\$6 a year, quarterly, Box 40568, San Francisco, Ca. 94140), which is of no interest whatsoever, **Gai Saber** and **Gay Sunshine**. **Gai Saber**, the new journal of the Gay Academic Union, has many serious, scholarly studies of "Japan's Homosexual Heritage," "Frederick the Great of Prussia: A Homophile Perspective," the art of Cavafy and Carson McCullers and many other topics whose exploration by gay savants actually seems, at the moment, to add something to the total sum of human knowledge (only for the robust of mind for \$18 a year, GAU, Box 480, Lenox Hill Station, New York, N.Y. 10021). **Gay Sunshine** (\$10 a year, Box 40397, San Francisco, Ca. 94940) features many long articles of cultural and historical significance and some cute pictures of nekkid boys, including the young Martin Duberman. Highly recommended for a light but compelling contact with the overtly gay intellect.

In addition to all these fine magazines published for an international audience, local gay communities are often served by regional weeklies that list entertainment events in the area. One of the best of these services is provided on a regional-edition basis by **Northern LJB Magazine**, which has editions in Miami, Long Island and elsewhere. ☐

CLEAN HIGH

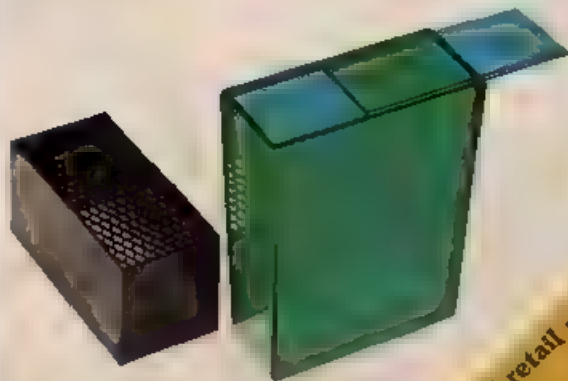


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Larry Flynt's Hustler magazine offered Linda Ronstadt and nine other celebs one million beans for a photo spread. The scandal sheets were soon awash with her purported response, "Why not?" Hustler then called her "in good faith," according to a spokesperson. "The money sounded nice, but she didn't want to show her



Wide World

Linda Ronstadt high priced spread charms to the world," says Hustler. "No consideration was ever given, the answer was always no," says Linda's manager Peter Asher. Either way, Flynt may need the million along with \$139 million more to pay off a suit by Penthouse publisher Bob Guccione and fiancée Kathy Keaton, Viva editor, who claim a recent caricature of them in Hustler was "lewd, indecent and embarrassing."

Just about everybody in attendance agreed that this year's Cannes Film Festival was one of the most memorable, it stunk so bad. Nevertheless a good time was had by all, owing, perhaps, to the international dope dealers who attended to preview the dope flicks. Village Voice pontificator Howard Smith may have run into one of them, he was late for the showing of his own movie due to torn muscles from uncontrollable sneezing.



Came Boretz

Howard Smith only his nose knows.



Charlie Fick

Deadheads share joint with Jerry Garcia, Sissy Spacek and John Davidson (right foreground)

Jerry Garcia was signing wet cocktail napkins, shirt sleeves, unclothed arms and open palms at the New York party for the opening of The Grateful Dead Movie. Between autographs, he passed around joints to other members of his band, all of

whom were in attendance except for bassist Phil Lesh who stayed behind in California. Also at the bash were the Dead's co-stars in the flick, the Hell's Angels, hobnobbing with the press, promo-people and, of course, the local fans and groupies.

England's premier punks, Johnny Rotten and the Sex Pistols, seem to be caught in the safety pin of destiny lately. Rotten caused quite a brouhaha when he said "fuck" on a BBC talk show, but the band made a lot of money when both A&M and EMI records successively broke recording contracts with them. The Pistols found a new label, Virgin Records, but ran into trouble when workers at the CBS pressing plant in England staged a temporary

walkout in protest of the "objectionable lyrics" in the band's new single, "God Save the Queen," which includes the lines "God save the Queen/A fascist regime made you a moron." The single shot up to the top 20 when it was finally released during Queen Elizabeth's Silver Jubilee, although many record stores still refuse to stock it. Neither "God Save the Queen" nor the Pistols's first hit, "Anarchy in the U.K." has yet been released in the U.S.

Two years after a media-hype overkill that threatened to destroy his rock career before it developed, Bruce Springsteen still keeps himself secluded from the press. Meanwhile, back in New Jersey,



Charlie Fick

Bruce Springsteen born to run from the press

Springsteen has been seen on occasion at the Stone Pony, the club he made famous, and cavorting at a local beach. But when Southside Johnny recently nixed a gig in Red Bank, New Jersey, due to a strep throat, his hometown Asbury Park pal Bruce came through as a replacement, singing with Johnny's Asbury Jukes and his own E Street Band. Springsteen recently resolved differences with former manager Michael Appel and has just finished recording a new album



Lynn Galsmith

Grace Slick skywriting her bio about Airplane and Starship.

Grace Slick is currently negotiating with publishers for the rights to her biography. Helen Rowles of the New York Times will pen Grace's legendary career with the Airplane and the Starship... International jet-setters are supposed to be hip, but when Princess Alexandra, Queen Elizabeth's cousin and one of the more conspicuous hiso's, asked Elton John "Do you take cocaine?" he had to admit he was stunned. But Cap Fantastic quickly recovered: "I told her I didn't take cocaine before I go on stage—which is the truth."

—Michael Chance & Peter Malloy

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Colombian Feds Raid Guerrilla Growers

Million Pound Bust

by A. Craig Copetas

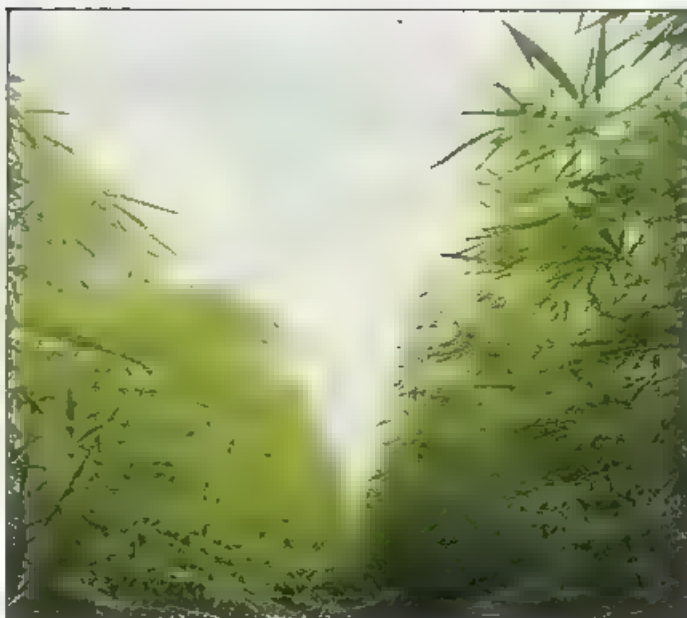
RIOHACHA, COLOMBIA—Units of Colombia's National Police based in Riohacha, capital of Guajira Peninsula on the Caribbean coast, have found what is thought to be the biggest pot plantation ever captured. Over 1,000 acres of top grade dope were netted, as well as 250 kilos of cured grass ready for export and sacks of seed ready for the next sowing. Twenty-four people were arrested for tending the crops.

The bust was ignited by a tip from Caracas, Venezuela, to the colonel commanding the Riohacha police. The informant said an arriving DC-6 was expected to load up over ten tons for transport to the U.S. from a clandestine airstrip in the area around the River Tapias. The airstrip is only a few miles inland from the coastline used to run so many boatloads of the same fine Colombian export.

Patrols were sent to the zone around the towns of Matias and Comegenes to locate the strip and grab the plane on arrival. The exporters spotted the patrols and tried to pay for cooperation, only getting busted for their pains. The track the exporters traveled to get to the strip was then followed back by the cops, leading them to the first of more than 40 fields of lush plants, thriving in the strong sun and 105-degree temperature.

Four different species of cannabis were found. Each had been planted at different times to produce a year-round harvest. Diesel pumps from the River Tapias fed irrigation channels and hoses were planted in neatly weeded rows. The total lack of pests and fungus suggested high-grade agricultural techniques, as did the several seedling beds used for selecting the best plants for transplant.

The local marijuana organization took swift revenge, gunning down a policeman with six shots in the back only five blocks from the police barracks. Police expect further reprisals. (Related photos on page 88.)



The greening of Riohacha lush tropical weed.



Plantation ran several miles through jungle mountains.

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Peru Seeks Coke Curb

LIMA, PERU—The Peruvian government has instituted drastic new laws aimed at eradicating cocaine production and exportation. The new legislation will dish out sentences of 6 to 20 years for those caught manufacturing or selling cocaine or any other drug, as well as those who provide places, equipment or transport for drug traffic. The same stiff sentence will apply to those caught growing coca for the purpose of extracting cocaine.

Peru's new law also provides for the confiscation of buildings and vehicles used by exporters, along with money and goods obtained from manufacture and export. The law includes sentences of 2 to 15 years in prison for narcs who bust cocaine and resell it under police protection.

Peru's cocaine crackdown comes in the wake of the country's booming export business. Hans Eblad, an employee of the United Nations drug task force here, recently claimed that 70 percent of the world's hallucinogens originate in Peru. Although Eblad's figure may be inflated sources here report that in the last 15 months cocaine traffic has grown by some 30 percent and that the number of people charged with cocaine trafficking rose to 1,500 in the same period.

Last May, in the southern Andean city of Juliaca, Peru, narcs discovered a camouflaged cocaine warehouse where 55,200 kilos of coca leaves were being processed into flake.

Peru's annual coca production is calculated at 20,000 tons, half of which are heaved used by Indian peasants. Another 5,000 tons are used for medical purposes and fla-

vorings. Most of Peru's coca production is centered in the semitropics 500 miles northeast of Lima.

Each year at least 5,000 additional tons of the pale green coca leaf are converted into 50 tons of pure Peruvian coca.

Government officials here are committed to a U.S.-backed program to substitute crops such as coffee for coca. However with over 50,000 acres producing coca, the substitution program has met with little success. In fact, coca acreage is growing as exporters pay farmers more money for growing coca than they do for coffee and bananas.

"The new law will buttonhole us a bit at first," confided a source in the cocaine export business here. "But time is on our side. People want to buy cocaine, and local farmers realize they can make more money growing coca rather than potatoes."

Colombia Eyes U.S. Pot Market

by A. Craig Copetas

BOGOTA—Colombia's Foreign Minister Indalecio Lizaro Aguirre, in an exclusive interview, said that his country is "studying the feasibility of legalizing this country's multibillion-dollar marijuana industry," and he hopes to soon initiate discussions with the U.S. in the near future over the possibility of marijuana for export.

"We understand Colombian marijuana is in big demand in the U.S.," said the foreign minister prior to the arrival of first lady Rosalynn Carter. "We are studying the problem," he observed. "We realize that several states in your country have decriminalized marijuana, and that approach seems to be working out. We will not come to

a decision on this until we talk to the United States.

"Until then, it's still a high priority for us to combat this traffic," said Aguirre, who served as right-hand man to Colombia's President Alfonso Michelsen. "There is no control over trade at the moment. We realize that if there were controls, large profits could be made," said the foreign minister in response to a study in Latin America Commodities Reports stating that Colombian marijuana export profit would exceed coffee profits for 1977.

When asked for his reaction to the popularity of Colombian pot, the 60-year-old Aguirre beamed and said, "It's not our fault that we have the best pot in the world."

"Operation Destroy" Grabs 10 Tons

Hawaiian Troops Called Up in War Against Pot

Hawaiian National Guardsmen and police joined forces in a sweep through thousands of acres of pot fields in an attempt to uproot the island state's marijuana economy. Governor George R. Ariyoshi decreed a state emergency after pointing out that marijuana is "the largest agricultural export" from the islands. More than ten tons of prime reefer fell to guard and police scythes in the first three days of "Operation Destroy."

Though the raids were limited to the islands of Kauai and Maui, famous for Kauai Gold and Maui Wowie, original plans also included the island of Hawaii, where officials backed out at the last minute, fearing "civil liability if raids are conducted without search warrants." On Kauai over 35 guardsmen and 16 policemen, backed up by state park personnel and four helicopters, joined in the marijuana harvest, wiping out an estimated six tons of plants on the first day. Maui units nabbed four more tons in the first two days.

The search-and-destroy teams had to hack their way through miles of dense vegetation to reach many of the hidden fields. In some fields inaccessible by land, helicopters dropped troops onto the field.

Police have estimated the value of the seized weed at between \$8 million and \$10 million. Although ten tons in three days was easily

more than the 400 pounds seized in the last year, Maui County Police Chief John S. San Diego conceded that it would not "break the back" of Hawaii's blossoming pot trade. Police have also charged that the plantings are the work of many small growers operating independently but selling to a central wholesale group.



3.7 tons of Kauai Gold lost to grim reaper as Hawaiian cop stands guard.

Bolivia Firm on U.S. Dope Prisoners

by Chip Berlet

Although one young American woman has been released from her Bolivian jail cell, the U.S. State Department has been unable or unwilling to secure the release of some 32 remaining U.S. prisoners busted on drug-related charges.

The Bolivian government has refused to deport the American prisoners, leaving them languishing in decrepit jails. Shortly after media attention was focused on the plight of the Yankee prisoners, harassment against them increased, and one American was stabbed.

Last month *High Times* reported a coordinated lobbying effort in Washington by parents and other relatives of the U.S. prisoners. The parents charged the State Department and the U.S. ambassador to Bolivia with calculated indifference to the conditions and treatment of their children. At a Capitol Hill press conference, parents reported beatings, attempted rapes by guards and other physical abuses on top of the normally wretched Bolivian prison conditions.

Under congressional pressure the State Department engaged in a flurry of activity, apparently with little success. Roni Abraham, mother of one of the prisoners, says the Bolivian government has rebuffed efforts to have the drug-busted prisoners deported back to

the U.S., although there is still a chance they could be deported after sentencing. "But that could take years," said a dejected Abraham who explained some prisoners had already spent months without court appearances.

Dr. William Farmer, another parent, called the jailing of the 32 Americans a diversion and a sham. "While there has been token compliance with American narcotics enforcement initiatives, the serious violators have gone about their business unmolested."

Farmer cited present United States overseas drug policies "conceptually bankrupt" and said U.S. efforts to stem narcotics traffic were "ill-conceived and misdirected." He called for an investigation into "widespread charges of illegal prac-

tices on the part of the Drug Enforcement Administration." According to Farmer, the U.S. government's response to their children's problem will, lost President Carter's concept of human rights. "If human

rights are not going to be extended to U.S. citizens in Bolivia, then it will appear to us as parents that the president's concern for human rights is politically motivated, not morally grounded," said Farmer.

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Rightists Defeated

Bourne Accused of Cocaine Plot

by Chip Berlet

Dr. Peter Bourne breezed through his Senate confirmation hearing despite a string of rightwing detractors who testified against his nomination as director of the White House Office of Drug Abuse Policy. Bourne's policies were called "bizarre" by one witness, and another called Bourne a "traitor" for attempting to turn Americans into "zombies" with drugs.

Appearing before the Senate Human Resources Committee, Bourne restated his position favoring the decriminalization of one ounce or less of marijuana. However, Bourne revealed he supported harsher penalties for traffickers and people repeatedly arrested for possession.

Bourne told the two senators present at the hearing that he had once smoked pot with some friends in Vietnam, but quickly added that he was not "a regular or chronic user of marijuana or other drugs."

Glen D. King, the executive director of the International Association

of Chiefs of Police, opposed Bourne's confirmation and forecast a pot epidemic and a domino theory of drug decriminalization. "Already arguments are being heard for legalizing cocaine," said King, who told the committee that marijuana causes delinquency in

youth. He added, "Unless you know something about marijuana an ounce seems to be a very limited amount. An ounce of marijuana is a very major amount, adequate to make a large number of marijuana cigarettes, perhaps enough to make 100 cigarettes." This estimate drew raised eyebrows from committee aides.

The next witness, Robert Bartell of the ultrarightist Liberty Lobby, said marijuana decriminalization contained "the seeds of grave international consequences." Bartell denounced the "close ties of the president and Dr. Bourne to the drug-oriented rock subculture" and termed proposed drug policies "bizarre" and "ill-conceived." Bartell alleged that decriminalization was repayment of a campaign debt to Capricorn Records honcho Phil

Walden, who helped raise \$2 million for Carter's campaign. "The illicit drug cocaine is a mainstay and marijuana an everyday fact of life" for the "rock subculture," said Bartell.

Bartell further alleged that Carter and Bourne both from Georgia are connected somehow to a conspiracy with the Atlanta-based Coca-Cola Company in an elaborate scheme involving cocaine. Coca-Cola is the largest legal importer of coca leaves into the U.S., extracting out the cocaine and using the de-drugged residue as part of their syrup base. Bartell noted that although some 2,000 pounds of cocaine are extracted yearly by Coca-Cola, less than half of that is accounted for. "We have no information as to what became of the substantial balance," said Bartell.

Lucey New Mex Envoy

WASHINGTON—Wisconsin Governor Patrick J. Lucey has been confirmed by Congress as the new U.S. ambassador to Mexico. Owing to diplomatic niceties, Lucey has been reluctant to tip his hand on the policies he will follow in Mexico City, other than to affirm his support for whatever initiatives are undertaken by President Carter. Privately, however, he confirms that he will follow the same guidelines that have set his course in the past—guidelines that have been among the most progressive of any national politician's. He is on record supporting decrim because "it makes no sense to arrest young people for possession of small amounts of marijuana."

"Basically, his attitude has been very favorable," said a Wisconsin decrim activist who regrets Lucey's imminent departure. A former aide to Lucey was even more forceful, saying the ambassador-to-be "has a very enlightened attitude towards the use of soft drugs."

However high Lucey's consciousness may be over the right to smoke, and his own children have demonstrated how tolerant he is, improving the lot of the 500 Americans currently languishing in Mexican jails will require the full force of powerhouse diplomacy.

Politicians of all persuasions agree that the conditions in Mexican prisons leave much to be desired. "Being there made having the Mexican Blues seem like a good time," said a recently released smuggler. "Many prisoners write that they have been badly abused," agreed a top staffer on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, who blamed the mistreatment on local jailers who ignore the guidance of federal officials.



Governor Patrick J. Lucey

Gallup Finds Pot Rivals Tobacco

American smokers are turning over a new leaf. According to a recent poll, one in four Americans, the same percentage that smokes cigarettes, tried marijuana at least once.

The latest Gallup survey of marijuana use in America shows that the percentage of the population that has tried the substance has doubled during the last four years. By contrast, tobacco users, numbering 53.3 million persons over age 12, have not significantly increased in numbers during that time period.

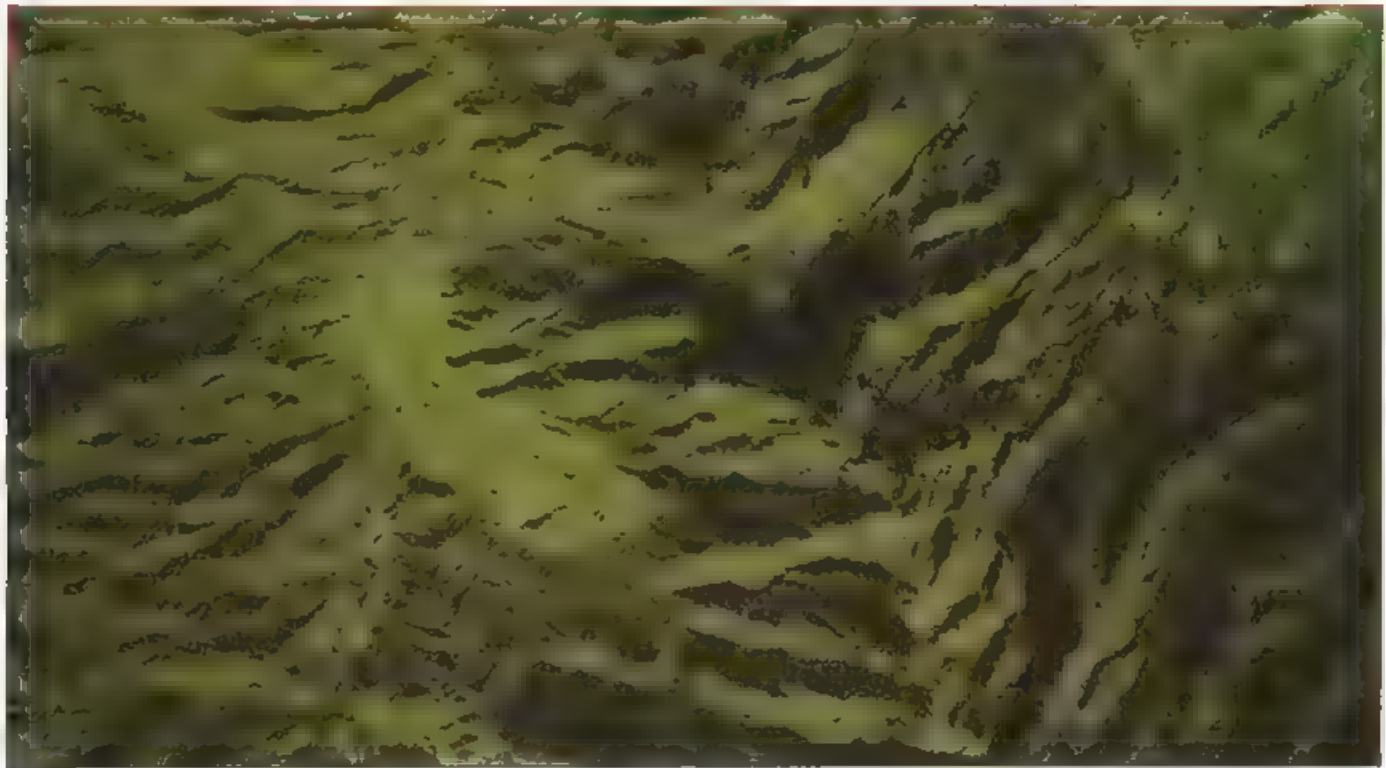
In 1969, when the Gallup Poll first inquired into pot use, only 4 percent of the public said they had tried it. Marijuana users tend to be

younger than the rest of the population, with males more likely than females to have used the stuff (31 percent to 17 percent). People who have been to college are more likely to have sampled weed than people whose education stopped at high school (36 percent to 23 percent). And if you haven't been to high school, you probably have never gotten high (5 percent).

The group most responsible for the dramatic upswing in pot use is the nation's nonwhite population, which has moved from an even score with whites in 1973 to a significantly higher position (36 percent to 22 percent) today.



Car ticketed for being stoned in California. Driver cited for overtime



This is an official aerial reconnaissance photo taken over Sinaloa by high-altitude spy planes. Green areas are suspect poppy and pot fields.

Pot War Offensive Subsides

by Craig Pyles

SINALOA, MEXICO—The monsoon season in the Sierra Madre has brought the first phase of Operation Condor to a close. The equivalent of 7 tons of heroin and 28,063 tons of marijuana has been confiscated so far in the biggest dope conflict since the Opium Wars. Also nabbed were 1,772 Mexican nationals and 108 foreigners, the majority Americans. Scores have died, thousands of weapons have been seized and whole villages have been arrested and put under martial law.

According to figures released by the Mexican attorney general's office, the fall-to-spring campaign netted 7,204 hectares of opium poppies and 1,849 hectares of marijuana with the aid of aerial spectrographic reconnaissance and the systematic spraying of commercial herbicides from Bell Huey helicopters over mountainous areas that only a few years ago would have taken the Mexican infantry months to reconnoiter by foot. The Mexican attorney general said his nation has committed 35 helicopters, 20 airplanes, 1,000 vehicles and 5,000 men to the battle.

Much of the capitalization and support of this force has come through the U.S. State Department's TRIZO program, a foreign policy initiative aimed at destroying illicit drugs in Mexico before they enter the American market. Since 1973, the American taxpayer has

donated \$35.3 million to support what has been called "the largest nonmilitary force operating in Latin America."

The State Department has asked

the Foreign Assistance Subcommittee to increase funding for the U.S. international narcotics control program to \$39 million for fiscal year 1978, which would go for military

equipment such as planes, radar sensors and satellites. Mexico is expected to receive the majority of a \$17.5-million request slated for Latin America.

Study Questions Dope War Results

A secret State Department study of Operation Condor, the U.S. dope war in Mexico, seriously questions the effectiveness of the costly program and points out that several highly toxic herbicides were used to destroy pot fields. The federal report was written by Dr. Walter G. Gentner, a herbicide expert employed by the Agriculture Department who last year conducted the study for the State Department's coordinator for international narcotics matters.

Charging that spray teams gave many suspect fields "multiple treatments or no treatments at all," Dr. Gentner's study shows huge financial waste in the \$60-million U.S. grant to the Mexican government to fight dope. Also, the Mexicans frequently used the wrong type of chemicals, were paying "outlandishly high prices" for one herbicide and were working with another compound that is highly toxic.

The report also scolded the use of the infamous 2, 4-D herbicide, the "agent orange" of Vietnam defolia-

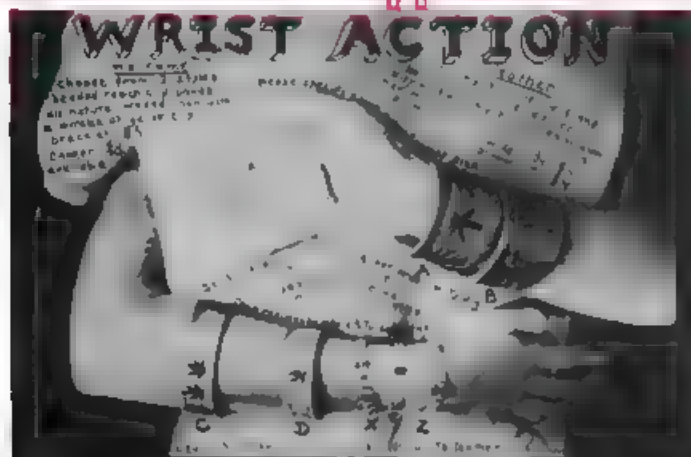
tion campaigns. Paraquat, another plant-killer "probably has caused more deaths, both purposeful and unintentional, than any other herbicide I know of," Gentner said. Paraquat and agent orange are

nonbiodegradable, able to poison months later miles downstream from the point of its use. Surviving pot sprayed with these poisons can be extremely hazardous to the health of U.S. smokers.



500 tons seized by Policia Nacional

Craig Pyles



Customs Puzzled Over Missing Coke

by Aureliano Segundo

United States Customs in Miami is scratching its head over what became of nearly 27 pounds of cocaine an audit claims is missing. At least 15 pounds of blow are unaccounted for and another 12 pounds may be missing. In addition, several million dollars in small quantities of cocaine and pot could not be found.

The internal Customs audit tallied 93 busts made in 1975. According to the Miami Herald, which broke the story after receiving a "confidential report," the discrepancies have been known to Customs for more than a year.

James E. Townsend, Miami district director of Customs, offered no

explanation for the missing cocaine, swearing that "we have audits more times than I change my underwear." He did say that agents may find dope that missed the bus to the destruction site. "Get back, find it in the seizure room and throw it in the river or flush it down the toilet."

Dope seized as evidence is held in the Customs seizure room until its physical evidence is no longer necessary. It is then destroyed with three customs officials present. After disposal, a receipt is filed with the U.S. district court. An audit of the dope seized in the 93 raids was \$7 million short of the receipts turned in to the district court.

Interpol Smuggling Charged

A dozen Bolivian Interpol officials have been zealously tracking down and arresting American cocaine smugglers in South America in order to wipe out the competition. According to testimony before a congressional subcommittee investigating U.S. involvement in the controversial French-based police agency, the Interpol "dirty dozen" are themselves trafficking in cocaine and are using their authority to tighten their grip on the market.

Vaughn Young, director of research for the Church of Scientology's National Commission on Law Enforcement and Social Justice (NCLE), submitted the names of the Interpol officials involved to Rep. Tom Steed's subcommittee on treasury appropriations, including evidence that the enterprising cops were not only busting U.S. smugglers, but also extorting money from them.

NCLE based its charges on a seven-month seven-nation investi-

gation of Interpol which they say is also implicated in the infamous French Connection heroin smuggling operation.

Arms Truce Broken

Sheriff's officers in Key West, Florida, are infuriated and are packing heavier firepower after a group of alleged smugglers opened fire on a deputy in violation of an agreement not to shoot at each other. Sheriff William Freeman "asked them not to come down here armed." The smugglers agreed, saying they would only carry weapons to protect themselves from each other, because they were tired of being ripped off.

The agreement came to an end when a sheriff's detective drew fire during a bust of 20.8 tons on North Key Largo. Eleven people were arrested. Cops say they will equip all patrol cars with Israeli Uzi sub-machine guns or AR-18 rifles.

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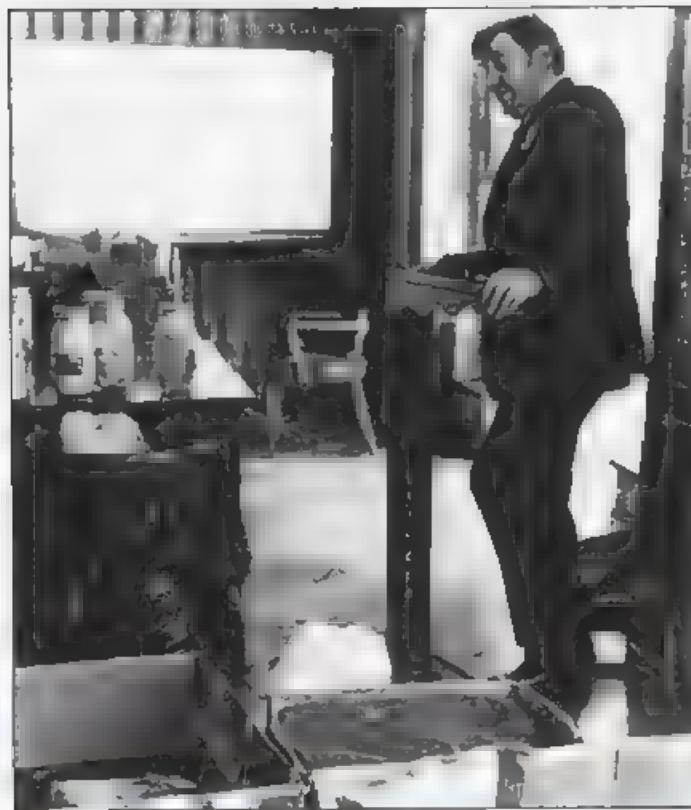


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Joanna Leary Turns State's Evidence

by Karen de Oriole

The frequent appearance of Joanna Leary, wife of former LSD advocate Timothy Leary, as a government witness in drug prosecutions has led to speculation that she has been working undercover for the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA).

The question arose when federal prosecutors in Portland, Oregon, recently revealed that Ms. Leary will appear as their witness in a major LSD trial. Bob Breakstone, a member of the Justice Department's Organized and Racketeering Crime Strike Force, said that she has been subpoenaed to testify in the case of five people accused of manufacturing LSD.

The alleged ring operated between 1970 and 1975, in California and Oregon, turning out what the prosecutor calls "the best Clear Light and Window Pane [acid] ever produced." Breakstone says the five were part of "the world's largest and highest grade LSD operation," distributing acid to 38 states and 5 foreign countries.

He said that Leary is not regarded by the Justice Department as a "friendly witness" and "did not play the role of a drug informant in this case." Leary has appeared as a prosecution witness in several previous drug trials.



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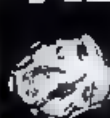
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Interview



Hunter Thompson

The good doctor tells all...about Carter, cocaine, adrenaline and the birth of Gonzo journalism

by Ron Rosenbaum

The first time I met Hunter Thompson was back in 1970, at the America's Cup yacht race where Hunter had chartered a huge power yacht and was preparing to sail it full steam right into the middle of the race course (This was shortly after his spectacular but unsuccessful run for the office of the sheriff of Aspen, Colorado, on a mescaline-eating "Capitalist Freak Power" ticket.) When I arrived on board the huge yacht, I found Thompson ensconced on the command deck, munching on a handful of psilocybin pills and regarding the consternation of the snooty Newport sailing establishment with amusement.

We never did manage to cross the path of the cup contenders and Scanlan's magazine went bankrupt before Hunter wrote up the whole fiasco, but I did learn one thing: this is a guy who understands the importance of perspective. He rode with the Hell's Angels—and got himself a nasty beating in the process of getting a unique perspective on them. He loaded his car, his bloodstream and his brain with full of dangerous drugs to cover a conference of drug-busting D.A.'s and turned that experience into *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas*, a brilliant exploration of the dark side of the drug scene at the peak of Nixon's power.

When he covered the 1972 presidential campaign as national affairs editor for *Rolling Stone*, Thompson's special deadline-and-drug-crazed "Gonzo" journalism—his own patented mix of paranoia, nightmare, recklessness and black humor—would fill nervous secret service agents with fear and loathing on the campaign trail. Ever since then, Thompson's become a kind of national character with millions of people following the exploits of "Uncle Duke" in the "Doonesbury" comic strip.

This year too, Thompson had another very special but very different perspective: he's widely reported to have become close to Jimmy Carter and to Carter's inner circle from the time back in 1974 when he heard Carter's now-famous *Low Day* speech. But curiously, there have been more articles speculating about Thompson—his relations with Jimmy

Carter and Jann Wenner—this year than by him. He's never put his own role into perspective until now.

High Times: How have your attitudes toward politics changed since you wrote about the '72 presidential election in *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail*?

Thompson: Well, I think the feeling that I've developed since '72 is that an ideological attachment to the presidency or the president is very dangerous. I think the president should be a businessman,

"Carter would put me in jail in an instant if he saw me snorting coke in front of him. He would not, however, follow me into the bathroom and try to catch me snorting."

probably he should be hired. It started with Kennedy, where you got sort of a personal attachment to the president, and it was very important that he agree with you and you agree with him and you knew he was on your side. I no longer give a fuck if the president's on my side, as long as he leaves me alone or doesn't send me off to any wars or have me busted. The president should take care of business, mind the fucking store and leave people alone.

High Times: So you developed a tired-of-fighting-the-White-House theory?

Thompson: I think I've lost my sense that it's a life or death matter whether someone is elected to this, that or whatever. Maybe it's losing faith in ideology or politicians—or maybe both. Carter, I think, is an egomaniac, which is good because he has a hideous example of what could happen if he fucks up. I wouldn't want to follow Nixon's act, and Carter doesn't either. He has a whole chain of ugly precedents to make him careful—Watergate, Vietnam, the Bay of Pigs—and I think he's very aware that even the smallest blunder on his part could mushroom into something that would queer his image

forever in the next generation's history texts if there is a next generation.

I don't think it matters much to Carter whether he's perceived as a "liberal" or a "conservative," but it does matter to him that he's perceived by the voters today and by historians tomorrow—as a successful president. He didn't run this weird Horatio Alger trip from Plains, Georgia, to the White House, only to get there and find himself hamstrung by a bunch of hacks and fixers in the Congress. Which is exactly what's beginning to happen now and those people are making a very serious mistake if they assume they're dealing with just another political shyster, instead of the zealot he really is. Jimmy Carter is a true believer, and people like that are not the ones you want to cross by accident.

I'm not saying this in defense of the man, but only to emphasize that anybody in Congress or anywhere else who plans to cross Jimmy Carter should take pains to understand the real nature of the beast they intend to cross. He's on a very different wavelength than most people in Washington. That's one of the main reasons he's president, and also one of the first things I noticed when I met him down in Georgia in 1974—a total disdain for political definition or conventional ideologies.

His concept of populist politics is such a strange mix of total pragmatism and almost religious idealism that every once in a while—to me at least, and especially when I listen to some of the tapes of conversations I had with him in 1974 and '75—that he sounds like a borderline anarchist...which is probably why he interested me from the very beginning, and why he still does, for that matter. Jimmy Carter is a genuine original. Or at least he was before he got elected. God only knows what he is now, or what he might turn into when he feels he's being crossed—by Congress, the Kremlin, Standard Oil or anything else. He won't keep any enemies list on paper, but only because he doesn't have to; he has a memory like a computerized elephant.

High Times: Did you ever have any ideology in the sense of being a liberal, a



conservative or were you an anarchist all along?

Thompson: I've always considered myself basically an anarchist, at least in the abstract, but every once in a while you have to come out of the closet and deal with reality. I am interested in politics, but not as ideology simply as an art of self-defense—that's what I learned in Chicago. I realized that you couldn't afford to turn your back on the bastards because that's what they would do: run amok and beat the shit out of you—and they had the power to do it. When I feel it's necessary to get back into politics, I'll do it, either writing about it or participating in it. But as long as it's not necessary, there are a lot of better ways to spend your time. Buy an opium den in Singapore, or a brothel somewhere in Maine; become a hired killer in Rhodesia or some kind of human Judas Goat in the Golden Triangle. Yeah, a soldier of fortune, a professional geek who'll do anything for money.

High Times: You've received a lot of flak for your enthusiasm about Jimmy Carter's Law Day speech in Athens, Georgia. Do you still like Carter?

Thompson: Compared to most other politicians, I do still like Carter. Whether I agree with him on everything, that's another thing entirely. He'd put me in jail in an instant if he saw me snorting coke in front of him. He would not, however, follow me into the bathroom and try to catch me snorting it. It's little things like that.

High Times: In that Law Day speech, Carter quoted Bob Dylan. Do you really think Carter cares about Bob Dylan's music the way we do?

Thompson: I listened to Bob Dylan records in his house, but that was mainly because his sons had them. I don't think he goes upstairs to the bedroom at night, reads the Bible in Spanish while listening to *Highway 61*.

"We don't want to cause a national panic by saying that a gang of closet coke freaks are running the country—although that would probably be the case, no matter who had won the election."

High Times: Why haven't you written anything about Carter and the '76 campaign trail?

Thompson: I was going to write a book on the '76 campaign, but even at the time I was doing research, I started to get nervous about it. I knew if I did another book on the campaign, I'd somehow be trapped.

I was the most obvious journalist—coming off my book on the 1972 campaign—to inherit Teddy White's role as a big-selling chronicler of presidential campaigns. I would have been locked into national politics as a way of life, not to mention as a primary source of income.... And there's no way you can play that kind of Washington Wizard role from a base in Woody Creek, Colorado. I'd have had to move to Washington, or at least to New York.... and, Jesus, life is too short for that kind of volunteer agony. I've put a lot of work into living out here where I do and still making a living, and I don't want to give it up unless I absolutely have to. I moved to Washington for a year in 1972, and it was a nightmare.

Yeah, there was a definite temptation to write another campaign book—especially for a vast amount of money in advance—but even while I was looking at all that money, I knew it would be a terminal

mistake. It wasn't until I actually began covering the campaign that I had to confront the reality of what I was getting into. I hadn't been in New Hampshire two days when I knew for certain that I just couldn't make it. I was seeing my footprints everywhere I went. All the things that were of interest last time—even the small things, the esoteric little details of a presidential campaign—seemed like jibberish the second time around. Plus, I lost what looks more and more like a tremendous advantage of anonymity. That was annoying, because in '72 I could stand against a wall somewhere—and I'd select some pretty weird walls to stand against—and nobody knew who I was. But in '76, Jesus, at press conferences, I had to sign more autographs than the candidates.

Through some strange process, I came from the '72 campaign an unknown reporter, a vagrant journalist, to a sort of media figure in the '76 campaign. It started getting so uncomfortable and made it so hard to work that even the alleged or apparent access that I had to this weird peanut farmer from Georgia became a disadvantage.

High Times: You became a public figure?

Thompson: Thanks to our friend Trudeau.

High Times: Did Garry Trudeau consult you before he started including you as the Uncle Duke character in "Doonesbury"?

Thompson: No, I never saw him; I never talked to him. It was a hot, nearly blazing day in Washington, and I was coming down the steps of the Supreme Court looking for somebody. Carl Wagner or somebody like that. I'd been inside in the press section, and then all of a sudden I saw a crowd of people and I heard them saying, "Uncle Duke." I heard the words Duke, Uncle, it didn't seem to make any sense. I looked around, and I recognized people who were total strangers pointing at me and laughing. I had no idea what the fuck they were talking about. I had gotten out of the habit of reading funnies when I started reading the Times. I had no idea what this outburst meant. It was a weird experience, and as it happened I was sort of by myself up there on the stairs, and I thought: What in the fuck madness is going on? Why am I being mocked by a gang of strangers and friends on the steps of the Supreme Court? Then I must have asked someone, and they told me that Uncle Duke had appeared in the Post that morning.

High Times: So all this public notoriety was a burden in trying to return to the campaign?

Thompson: It was impossible because there was no way for me to stay anonymous, to carry on with what I consider my normal behavior, which is usually—in terms of a campaign—either illegal or dangerous or both.... It was generally assumed that I was guilty—which I was.

High Times: So eventually you found that refuge in a kind of band of brothers?

Thompson: What? No, I have never had

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much faith in concepts like "a band of brothers"—especially in politics. What we're talking about here is a new generation of highly competent professional political operatives and also a new generation of hot-rod political journalists who are extremely serious and competitive during the day, but who happened to share a few dark and questionable tastes that could only be mutually indulged late at night, in absolute privacy.

Because no presidential candidate even wants to know, much less have to explain at a press conference, why rumors abound that many of his speech writers, strategists and key advance men are seen almost nightly—and sometimes for nine or ten nights in a row—frequenting any of the two or three motel rooms in the vortex of every primary campaign that are known to be "dope dens," "orgy pads" and "places of deep intrigue."

They simply don't want to hear these things, regardless of how true they may be—and in 1976 they usually were, although not in the sense that we were running a movable dope orgy, right in the bowels of a presidential campaign—but it was true that for the first time, there was a sort of midnight drug underground that included a few ranking staff people, as well as local workers and volunteers, from almost every democratic candidate's staff, along with some of the most serious, blue-chip press people—and it was also true that some of the most intelligent and occasionally merciless conversations of the whole campaign took place in these so-called dope dens.

Hell, it was a fantastic luxury to be able to get together at night with a few bottles of Wild Turkey or Chivas Regal and a big tape deck with portable speakers playing Buffett or Jerry Jeff or The Amazing Rhythm Aces... yeah, and also a bag of ripe Colombian tops and a gram or two of the powder; and to feel relaxed enough

with each other, after suffering through all that daytime public bullshit, to just hang out and talk honestly about what was really happening in the campaign... You know, like which candidate was fatally desperate for money, which one had told the most ridiculous lie that day, who was honest and who wasn't.

In a lot of ways it was the best part of the campaign, the kind of thing I'd only be able to do with a very few people in 1972 and '68. But in '76 we were able, because there were enough of us—to establish a sort of midnight-to-dawn truce that tran-

**"They tried
to bar me from
the White House during the
impeachment thing. In
order to get in the White
House I had to promise not
to call anybody a Nazi
cocksucker."**

sceded all the daytime headline pibberish, and I think it helped all of us to get a better grip on what we were really doing.

I could illustrate this point a lot better by getting into names and specific situations, but I can't do that now for the same reason I couldn't write about it during the campaign. We all understand that, and the very few times I even hinted at this midnight underground, I did it in code phrases—like "tapping the glass."

High Times: Tapping the glass. I wonder if you could explain that?

Thompson: Well, that's one of those apparently meaningless code phrases that I use in almost everything I write. It's a kind of lame effort to bridge the gap between what I know and what I can write without

hurting my friends—sort of working on two or three levels at the same time.

High Times: So if you go back and read your stories, a scene where you talk about "tapping the glass" with Carter campaign staffer "X"?

Thompson: Right. That means chopping up rocks of cocaine on a glass coffee table or some mirror we jerked off the wall for that purpose—but not necessarily with one of Carter's people. The whole point of this wretched confession is that there were so many people tapping the glass in the '76 campaign that you never knew who might turn up at one of those midnight sessions. They were dangerously nonpartisan. On any given night you would meet Udall and Shriver staffers, along with people from the Burch Bayh and Fred Harris campaigns. Even George Wallace was represented from time to time; and, of course, there was always the hard corps of press dopers.

High Times: That's amazing. You were covering this media-saturated presidential campaign during the day, then snorting coke at night with all those hotshot politicians?

Thompson: They weren't very hotshot then.

High Times: OK. But since we're talking about drug use during the '76 campaign, it's obvious we're talking about people who are now in the White House, right?

Thompson: Well...some of them, yes. But let's get a grip on ourselves here. We don't want to cause a national panic by saying that a gang of closet coke freaks are running the country—although that would probably be the case, no matter who had won the election.

High Times: Times are definitely changing, eh? But since Carter won the election, let's focus on him for a moment.

Thompson: Well, why not? Let's see how thin a wire we can walk here, without getting ourselves locked up... Indeed, and meanwhile let's rent a big villa in the mountains of Argentina, just in case my old friend Jimmy is as mean as I always said he was. Anyway, yeah, we're talking about at least a few people in the White House inner circle, not Cy and Ziggy and that crowd, the professional heavies who would have gone to work for anybody—Carter, Humphrey, Brown. Shit, they'd even work for me, if I'd won the election.

High Times: The inner circle of Carter's people are serious drug users?

Thompson: Wait a minute, I didn't say that. For one thing, a term like *serious users* has a very weird and menacing connotation; and, for another, we were talking about a few people from almost everybody's staff. Across the board. Not junkies or freaks, but people who were just as comfortable with drugs like weed, booze or coke as we are—and we're not weird, are we? Hell no, we're just overworked professionals who need to relax now and then have a bit of the whoop and the giggle, right?



High Times: Weren't they nervous, or were you nervous, when you first started doing coke together?

Thompson: Well, I suppose I should have expected the same kind of difference between, say, the '72 and '76 campaigns as I saw between '88 and '72. When I went to New Hampshire in '88 I was a genuine unknown. I was the only person except for Bill Cardozo who would smoke weed, ever, I mean in the press. In '72 it was a revolution in that sense, and people in the press openly smoked hash and did coke. So I should have expected it in '76, but I hadn't really thought of it. It stunned me a little bit in '76 that coke was as common as weed had been in '72 and almost right out in the open, used in a very cavalier fashion. As I say, in 1972 it was a fairly obvious consistent use of the weed by McGovern's people, in '68 it was McCarthy, but this time it was across the board.

High Times: In a way, what you're saying is that it was a kind of truth-telling substrate of drug users, and that's why you couldn't write stories about it.

Thompson: Yes, for the first time I was really faced with the problem of knowing way too much.

High Times: Was this a good or a bad thing?

Thompson: I think it was good. It allowed people who would never under the circumstances have been able to sit down, get stoned and talk honestly about

whether they should even be working there.

High Times: People are always asking how did you get away with it. Why aren't you in jail with all the stuff you write about drugs on the campaign trail? Do you feel that the secret service was specifically tailing you after you started writing these articles about all the dope you had taken?

Thompson: No. I made my peace with the secret service early in '72 when I went to a party in the Biltmore Hotel here in New York after McGovern's primary victory,

**"I just
whacked the needle
into my leg
without thinking.
In the corner
of my eye
I saw
a lot of red."**

and there were about ten agents in a room. Three of them were obviously passing a joint around. The look on their faces when I walked in there... all of them turning to look when I walked in... it was a wonderful moment of confrontation. I didn't want to be there, they didn't want me in there. Immediately they just

crushed the joint and tried to ignore it. But the room was obviously full of marijuana smoke.

High Times: And everybody knew that you knew.

Thompson: Oh yeah, of course. But I decided not to write about it - at least not right away.

High Times: Was there ever any kind of trouble with the secret service after that?

Thompson: No trouble at all, except when they tried to bar me from the White House during the impeachment thing. I called the guards Nazi cocksuckers or something, and in order to get in the White House I had to promise not to call anybody Nazi cocksuckers. I just waved my hand at the White House itself, you know, with Hal deman inside. I kind of got off that hook. And then I promised not to call anyone Nazi cocksuckers, and they let me in.

High Times: Some of your fans wonder if you ever make up some of the bizarre incidents you describe. You've said that all the outrageous drugs you did and things you did in your Las Vegas book were true, except the notorious incident where you supposedly paralyzed yourself with adrenochrome extract from live human adrenal glands.

Thompson: If I admitted that it was true, it was tantamount to admitting that I was a first-degree murderer of the foulest sort, that somebody would kill a child in order to suck out the adrenaline.

High Times: But in the book you didn't

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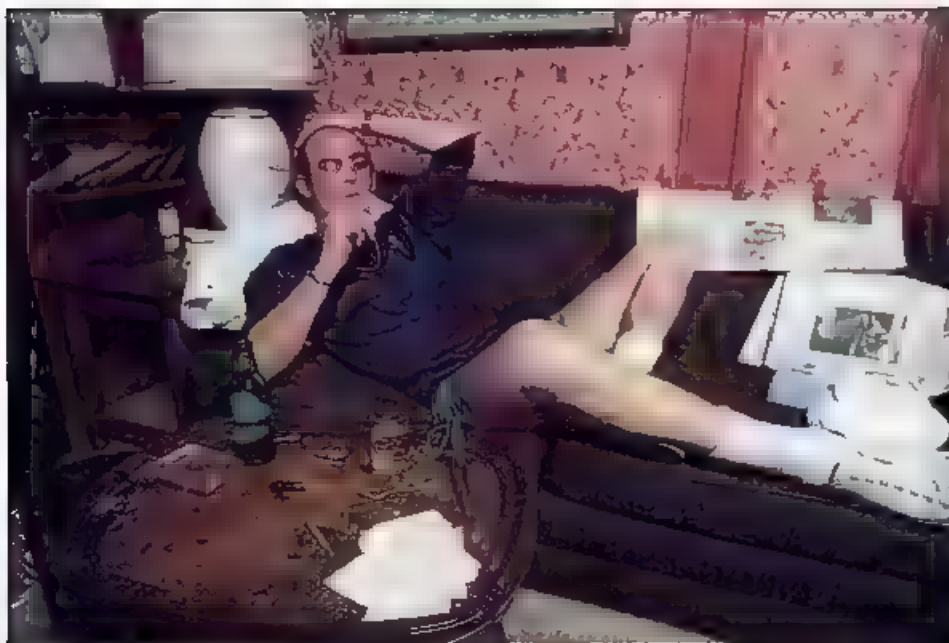
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say that you killed the kid. You just said that you got it

Thompson: That's right. I said that my attorney had gotten it from a client of his. What I was doing was taking what you normally feel from shooting adrenaline into the realm of the extremely weird.

High Times: Have you ever had that feeling? Shooting adrenaline?

Thompson: Oh, yes. Whenever it was necessary. Sometimes nothing else works. When you really have to stay up for the fifth day and fifth night... and nothing will work, not even black beauties. Then you shoot adrenaline. But you have to be very careful with it. First, don't ever shoot it into a vein. That's doom. But even then you've got to be very careful because you can drive yourself completely berserk, and I'm sure it would be just the way I described it in *Las Vegas*.

High Times: I always thought you were talking in metaphorical terms when you said, "I like to work on the adrenaline."

Thompson: Yeah, but usually my own. I'm really an adrenaline junkie; I never get anything done without the pressure of some impossible deadline.

High Times: How would you describe the adrenaline high?

Thompson: At its best it's one of the most functional of all the speed sort of drugs in that it has almost no rush unless you overdo it, and almost no crash. I never considered speed fun. I use speed as fuel, a necessary evil. Adrenaline is much smoother and much more dangerous if you fuck up. I fucked up one time in a motel in Austin, Texas. I was very careless, and I just whacked the needle into my leg without thinking. I'd forgotten the vein thing, and after I pulled the little spike out, I noticed something was wrong. In the bathroom the tile was white, the curtain was white—but in the corner of my eye in the mirror I looked down and saw a hell of a lot of red. Here was this

**"Here was a flashlight
glaring right in
my face, and
right beside the flashlight
was a big, dirty .57
magnum pointed at me.
They didn't give a fuck
about my license."**

little tiny puncture, like a leak in a high-powered hose.... You could barely see the stream. It was going straight from my leg and hitting the shower curtain at about thigh level, and the whole bottom of the curtain was turning red.

I thought, oh Jesus Christ, what now? And I just went in and lay down on the bed and told the people in the room to get out without telling them why, then I waited 20 minutes and all I could think of was these horrible James Joplin stories: you know, OD'ing in a motel... Jim Morrison, Jimi Hendrix... needles. And I thought, oh fuck, what a sloppy way to go—I was embarrassed by it. But after 20 minutes nothing happened. Then I really began to get nervous and I thought, oh God, it's going to come all at once. It's a delayed thing, like those acid flashbacks they've been promising all these years.

High Times: When are we going to have them?

Thompson: I've been waiting for a long time.

High Times: Once I asked a friend of yours why you are so attracted to Carter, and this guy says, well, Carter's basically in a lot of ways a conservative good old boy and so is Hunter. Do you think that's true in some ways, or that you're a good old boy that's gone weird?

Thompson: That sounds better. Good old boy gone weird. That's a good line anyway. I wouldn't deny that; I would just as soon admit it.

High Times: You had a fairly straight upbringing in Louisville, Kentucky, didn't you?

Thompson: Well, I was a juvenile delinquent, but a straight juvenile delinquent. The kind that wore white bucks, but toned-down Oxford cloth shirts, suits. It was a good cover to use to rob crowded liquor stores. I discovered then that it helps to have a cover. If you act as weird as you are, something terrible is bound to happen to you, if you're as weird as I am. I mean if I looked like I thought, I wouldn't be on the streets for very long.

High Times: Were you ever busted?

Thompson: Yeah, repeatedly. I learned about jails a lot earlier than most people. On about ages 15 through 18 I was in and out of jails continually. Usually for buying booze under age or for throwing 55-gallon oil drums through filling station windows—you know, those big plate glass windows. And then I was expelled from school once—for rape, I think. I wasn't guilty, but what the hell. We were in the habit of stealing five or six cases of beer on weekends to drink. That night was the Friday night after my expulsion. We did our normal run and stole about five or six cases. We took one of them and put it on the superintendent of schools' lawn at one o'clock in the morning and very carefully put 20 whole bottles right through every pane in the front of his house. We heard them exploding inside, and they must have gone mad—you hear them in the bedrooms, in the living room, every window was broken. I mean, what kind of thugs would do that? Twenty-four hand beer bottle grenades... to wake up and hear the whole house exploding! Which window is going to be hit next? We deliberately took about ten minutes to put them through there because we knew they'd never get the cops there in ten minutes.

High Times: Makes you feel someone's out to get you. Twenty-four bottles of beer, that's heavy. So you were into overkill when making statements?

Thompson: That wasn't overkill. It was massive retaliation, the court of final resort. I was expelled for something I hadn't done or even thought about doing.

High Times: What is your favorite drug experience?

Thompson: Well, there are very few things that can really beat driving around the Bay Area on a good summer night, big motorcycle, head full of acid—wearing nothing but a T-shirt and a pair of shorts and getting on that Highway 1 going 120 miles an hour. That's a rush of every kind—head, hands—it's everything put in a bundle. Because first of all, it's a rush, and also it's maintaining control and see how far I can go, how weird I can get and still survive, even though I'm seeing rats in

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front of me instead of cops. Rats with guns on...

High Times: How do you handle something like that?

Thompson: I never know. It's interesting, always a different way. Mainly it's figuring out real fast whom you are dealing with, and what their rules are. One of the few times I ever got in trouble, I wasn't drunk or pumped up. I had a loaded 44 magnum in the glove compartment, a bottle of Wild Turkey open on the seat beside me, and I said, well, this is a good time to try that advice a hippie lawyer gave me once—to pull down the window just a crack and stick out my driver's license. So I started to do that. I was just getting it out, when all of a sudden the door on the other side opened. I looked around, and here was a flashlight glaring right in my face, and right beside the flashlight was a big, dirty .57 magnum pointed at me. They didn't give a fuck about my license. They jerked me out of the car and pushed me up against the side. I said something about my constitutional rights, and they said, "Well, sue us" or something and kicked my legs. So I gave it up and eventually I paid a \$35 fine, because it's easier than arguing. I had just bought the car. It was a Saab. The night before I had pushed my English Ford off a cliff in Big Sur, 400 feet down to the ocean, to get even with the bastard for all the trouble it caused me. We filled it with gasoline and set it on fire just before it went over the edge.

Ever since then I have made it a point to be polite to the California Highway Patrol. I have a National Rifle Association sticker on the back window of my car, so that any cop on the driver's side has to pass that and see it. I used to carry a police badge in a wallet, and that helped a lot.

High Times: I reread *Fear and Loathing in Las Vegas* last summer. I loved it, but I felt it was really a sad book filled with regret for the passing of the San Francisco scene.

Thompson: No, not really. But I think almost any kind of humor I like always has a touch of melancholy or weirdness in it. I seem to be alone, for instance, in considering Joseph Conrad one of history's great humorists.

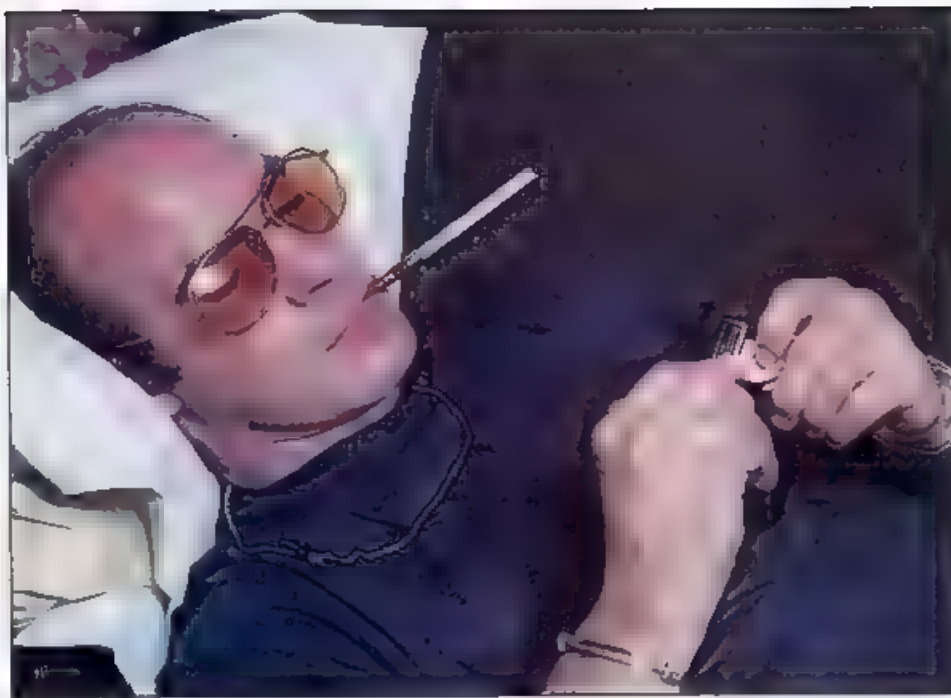
High Times: Were you also down on the drug experience in that book?

Thompson: No. I kind of assumed that this was sort of a last fling; that Nixon and Mitchell and all those people would make it very soon impossible for anybody to behave that way and get away with it. It wouldn't be a matter of a small fine. Your head would be cut off.

High Times: So it's a real exploration of terminal paranoia.

Thompson: Well... It was kind of a weird celebration for an era that I figured was ending.

High Times: Maybe you can tell us the true story of the birth of Gonzo journalism. It was the Kentucky Derby story you did for Scanlon's magazine in 1969, right?



**"If you act
as weird as you are,
something terrible is
bound to happen to you.
I seem to be alone, for
instance, in considering
Joseph Conrad
one of history's
great humorists."**

Thompson: I guess it's important to take it all the way back to having dinner in Aspen with Jim Salter, a novelist who had sort of a continental style. It was one of those long European dinners with lots of wine, and Salter said something like, "Well, the Derby's coming up. Aren't you going to be there?" And I thought, well, I'll be damned. That's a good idea.

I was working at the time for Warren Hinkle at Scanlon's magazine. So I immediately called Hinkle and said, "I have a wonderful idea, we must do the derby. It's the greatest spectacle the country can produce." It was 3:30 in the morning or something like that, but Hinkle got right into it. By that time I'd learned to hate photographers, I still do. I can't stand to work with them. So I said we've got to get an illustrator for this, and I had Pat Oliphant in mind. Hinkle said fine, you know, do it.

In an hour's time the whole thing was settled. Oliphant wasn't available, but Ralph Steadman was coming over on his first trip to the U.S. and it was all set up that I would go to Louisville and do the

advance work, and Ralph would meet me there later.

I think I took off the next day. The whole thing took less than 24 hours. I got there and of course found that the place was jammed, there were no rooms and it was out of the question to get a press pass. The deadline had been three months earlier. It took me about two days to get two whole press kits. I'm not sure exactly how I did it. I traded off the outrage, which was so gross, that somebody from a thing called Scanlon, which we told them was an Irish magazine famous all over the world, was sending a famous European artist to illustrate the derby for the British Museum, weird stuff like that. They agreed to give me two of everything except passes to the clubhouse and the drunk tank—I mean the blue-blood drunk tank at the center of the clubhouse. That's where Goldwater and all the movie stars and those people sit. The best seats in the house. They wouldn't give us those. So I think we stole those.

In any case, we got total access to everything including a heavy can of mace... Now this is bad, this is ugly. The press box is on the roof, directly over the governor's box. And I had this can of mace, I'm not sure why... maybe for arguments, mace is a very efficient way of ending arguments. So I'd been fondling the can in my pocket, but we couldn't find any use for it—nobody threatened me. I was kind of restless. Then just before the derby started we were standing in the front row of the press box, up on the roof, and just for the hell of it I blasted the thing about three times about 100 feet straight down to the governor's box. Then I grabbed Ralph and said let's get out of here. Nobody maces the governor in the press box. It's not done. It's out of the question. I have no idea what the hell went on in the box when the stuff hit

because we took off. That was sort of the end of the story.

About two days later, Ralph had all the drawings done, and I stayed on to write the story, but I couldn't get much done. That goddamned Kent State thing happened the Monday after the derby, that was all I could think of for a while. So I finally flew up to New York, and that's when the real fear started. Most of the magazine was either printed or on the press out in San Francisco—except for my story, which was the lead story, which was also the cover story, and I was having at the time what felt to me like a terminal writer's block, whatever the hell that means.

I would lie in the bathtub at this weird hotel. I had a suite with everything I wanted—except I couldn't leave. After three days of not writing more than two pages, this kind of anxiety/depression syndrome builds up, and it really locks you up. They were sending copy boys and copy girls and people down every hour to see what I had done, and the pressure began to silently build like a dog whistle kind of scream, you know. You couldn't hear it but it was everywhere.

After the third day of that horrible lockup, I'd lie in the tub for three hours in the morning drinking White Horse scotch out of the bottle—just lying in the tub, feeling like, "Well, I got away with it for a while, but this time I've pushed it too far." But there was no alternative; something had to go in.

Finally I just began to tear the pages out of my notebooks since I write constantly in the notebooks and draw things, and they were legible. But they were hard to fit in the telecopier. We began to send just torn pages. When I first sent one down with the copy boy, I thought the phone was going to ring any minute, with some torrent of abuse from whoever was editing the thing in the New York office. I just sort of sat back and watched TV.

I was waiting for the shit to hit the fan... But almost immediately the copy boy was back and wanted more. And I thought, "Ah, ha, what's this?" Here's the light at the end of the tunnel. Maybe they're crazy, but why worry? I think I actually called Hinkle in San Francisco and asked him if he wanted any more pages and he said, "Oh, yeah. It's wonderful stuff—wonderful." So I just began to tear the fucking things out. And sometimes I would have to write handwritten inserts—I just gave up on the typewriter—sending page after page right out of the notebook, and of course Hinkle was happy as 12 dogs. But I was full of grief and shame; I thought this was the end, it was the worst hole I had ever gotten into. And I always had been almost pretty good about making deadlines—scaring people to death, but making them. This time I made it, but in what I considered the foulest and cheapest way, like Oakland's unclear touchdown against Miami—off

balance, they did it all wrong six seconds to go—but it worked.

They printed it word for word, even with the pauses, thoughts and jagged stuff like that. And I felt nice that I hadn't sunk the magazine by failing to get the story done right, and I slunk back to Colorado and said oh fuck when it comes out I'm going to take a tremendous beating from a lot of people.

But exactly the opposite happened. Just as soon as the thing came out, I started getting calls and letters. People were calling it a tremendous breakthrough in journalism, a stroke of genius. And I thought, What in the shit?

One of the letters came from Bill Cardozo, who was the editor of the Boston Globe Sunday Magazine at the time. I'd heard him use the word Gonzo when I covered the New Hampshire primary in '68 with him. It meant sort of "crazy," "off the-wall"—a phrase that I always associate with Oakland. But Cardozo said something like, "Forget all the shit you've been writing, this is it, this is pure Gonzo. If this is a start, keep rolling." Gonzo.

**"I just began
to tear the pages
out of my notebooks.
I was full of grief and
shame; I thought
this was the end,
the worst hole I had ever
gotten into."**


Yeah, of course. That's what I was doing all the time. Of course, I might be crazy. **High Times:** Is it sheer intelligence?

Thompson: Well, it's more than that. Let's not forget now I've had at least ten years of paying dues. I know I have some talent, whatever that means. Some people are good at money and some people are good at basketball. I can use words to my advantage, which is a great trick to have.

High Times: Are there some things in your notebooks you can't put in your stories?

Thompson: All the best stories are unwritten. More and more I find that I can't tell the whole truth about events. I have one book I'd like to write and the rest will have to be done to pay the fucking rent. That'll be the one where there'll be no question if anybody's lying. Well, there will be some question, but the truth is usually a lot weirder than anything you can make up. I'll make sure that it dooms as many people as possible—an absolutely true account, including my own disaster and disappearances. To hell with the American Dream. Let's write it off as a suicide. ■

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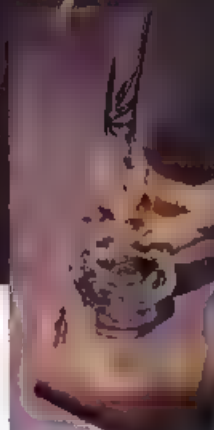
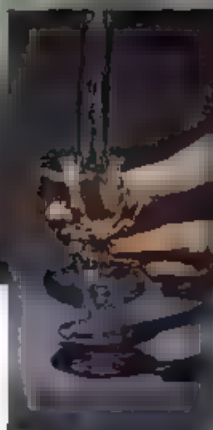
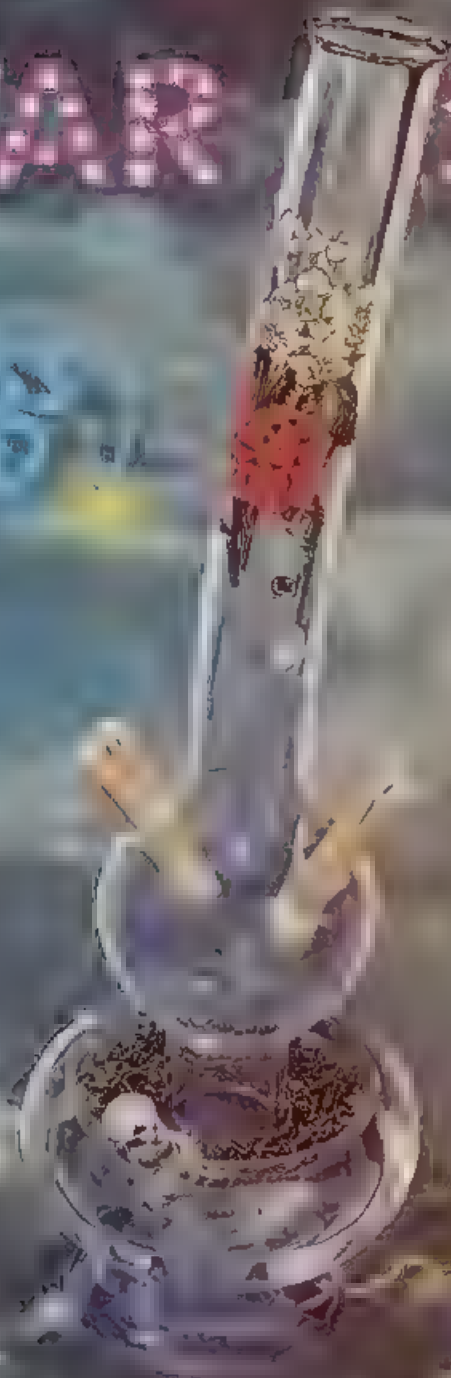
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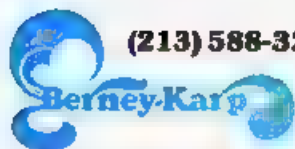


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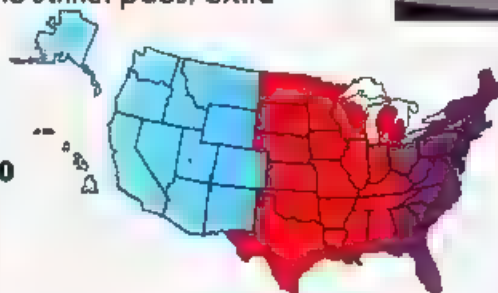
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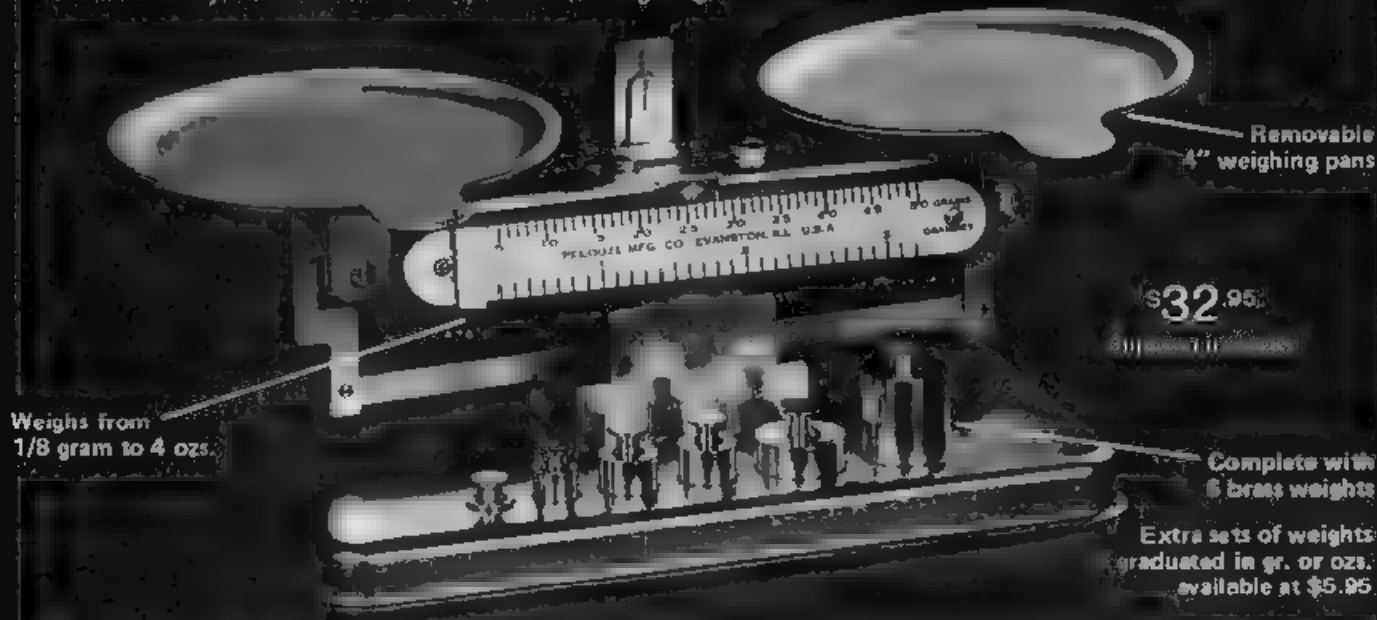


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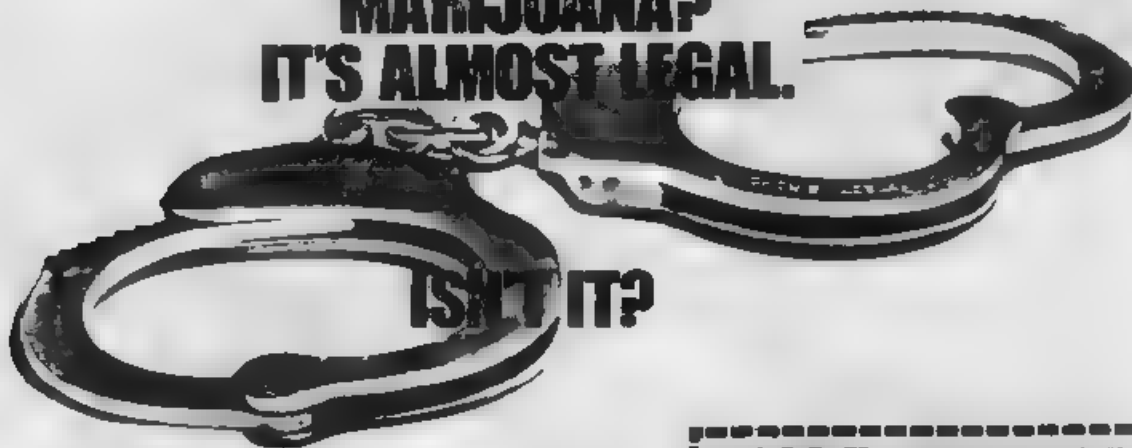
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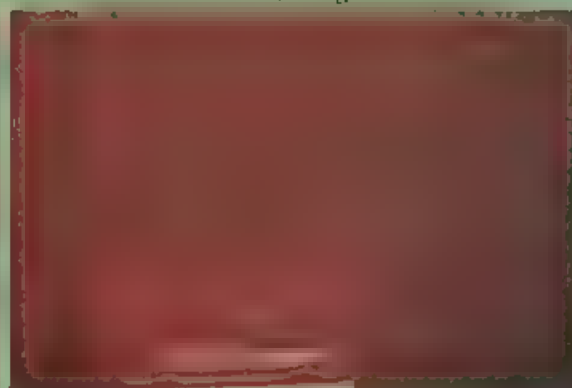
by Lucy Vance and Julian Harrison

This year alone, over \$4 million is being spent by the government on a variety of marijuana research projects. In the November '76 issue of *High Times*, we took an exclusive look at the only government-endorsed pot plantation in the U.S., located just off the campus of the University of Mississippi. Now we follow the trail of the legal weed to where it's processed into pot cigarettes that are dispensed by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) for research throughout the country. NIDA pot goes to scientists studying the medical potential of cannabis in treating glaucoma, high blood pressure, epilepsy, asthma and cancer. Investigators also continue to test hemp's effects on health. Even though no damage has been confirmed yet, antipot crusaders keep hoping. Various laboratories are scrutinizing stoned memory, thought processes, chromosomes, sexual response, lung function, driving, motivation, heart action and blood chemistry—and all must either use Uncle Sam's grass or face prosecution.

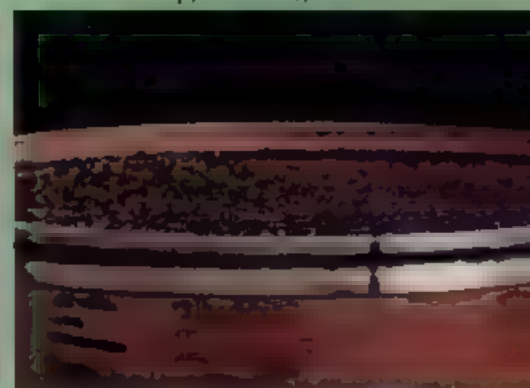
1. Pot trucks unload at this bay



2. The Ole Miss farm grows the weed



3. It's shipped in huge sealed drums



4. Each batch is tested for THC content



5. Some is made into oil or pure THC



6. Sievers wear white coats and masks



Research Triangle Park, in the woody Piedmont section of North Carolina, is the home of a variety of research projects ranging from birth control to crop control. Trucks laden with drums of the marijuana harvested in Mississippi arrive at a plain, two-story concrete building housing the analysis equipment and rolling machine. Funded by NIDA, the marijuana project has no official name, is unpublicized and is carefully shielded from curiosity seekers and dope groupies.

The first step in processing is the *sizing* of the grass. This means to remove the fine, dustlike particles (called *lines*) that might otherwise clog up the rolling machine and inhibit an easy draw on the test "cigarettes." The lines, obtained by sieving, are used for obtaining extracts to use in other research projects (i.e., eyedrops for glaucoma patients), or else they are incinerated or composted into the ground.

Says the project coordinator, "These things have to be accounted for and disposed of in the most careful manner, even what we vacuum up off the floor." The Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) keeps a watchful eye on the records.

Step two is *homogenizing* the different batches of grass that arrive, to insure a uniform THC content for those picky researchers. "Physically, it's a matter of mixing," according to the coordinator. "This is done by dumping it all into one pile and dividing that pile into two piles, and... " and eventually dumping it all back into one homogeneous pile.

At this point, "the plant material is still too dry to pass through the cigarette machine, so we have to add moisture to it in order that it be soft and pliable enough to be molded into cigarettes." A sprayer is used, the grass is mixed again and excess water driven off (leaving about 15

7. Pollen and resin dust are removed,



8. Sifting lowers the quality but



9. makes a uniform rolling texture.



10. Mounds of dope litter the lab



11. Mixing standardizes THC levels



12. The grass is watered down



13. Every scoop is accounted for.



14. Plastic bags keep it moist



15. It spends the night in cold storage



percent water content). Weighing of the material occurs at every stage and is duly recorded

After a night in the freezer (to soak up the water and become uniformly moist), the sized, homogenized and sprayed marijuana is ready to roll. The cigarette machine is an outdated hulk over 50 years old ("We have to do the best with what money we have"). It is equipped with a large comb-filled hopper to separate seeds and twigs. The cost of operating (and constantly repairing) the machine runs to \$30,000 a year, and the unit cost of each joint rolled is 15 cents.

The joints spend a night drying in trays and are examined the next day to reject those that are too loosely packed or that have bad ends. Of a batch weighing 100 kilograms, "we make approximately 100,000 cigarettes. Of those, we will probably retain 50,000 good enough for use."

Next stop, Maryland, where the joints wait in a deep-freeze warehouse to be distributed through the NIDA to various research organizations.

Obviously, the government does not have the slightest idea how to prepare good marijuana for smoking. Crushing, sifting, watering and mixing marijuana are all taboo to marijuana connoisseurs. It is no wonder that the government comes up with weird test results. High Times feels that this processing is proof that the government does not know what it is doing, thus invalidating all government marijuana research. Any dealer that abused his/her dope like these people would soon find him/herself without customers. No wonder they pay people to smoke it. An investigation should be made of the "marijuana" the government is distributing! ☐

16. Filling the antique rolling machine



17. Rolling paper is threaded



18. A technician adjusts joint size



19. Federal jays look like Luckies



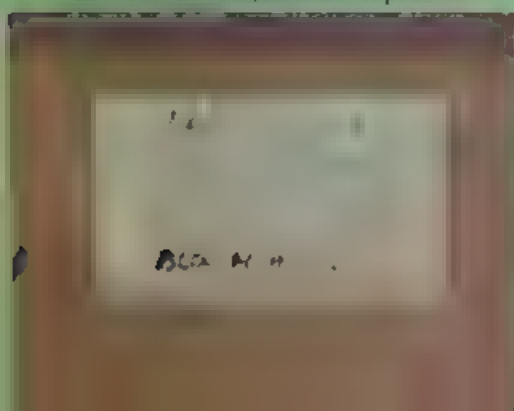
20. These workers are well watered



21. Samples are weighed and tested



22. Federal boo joins lab shipments



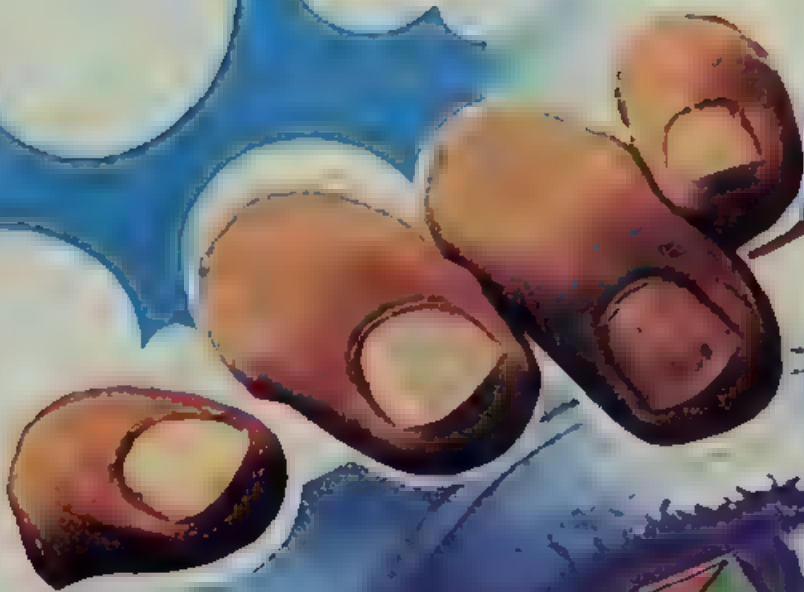
23. Dried reefers are packed in cans



24. Final packages are tested



PHIOSP



RUSH

PHENES

Star wars of inner space

"First, close your eyes. Now, with your index fingers at the inner edge of your eyeballs, press in and toward the temples. Press until it's slightly painful and keep at it for about ten seconds."

"Like this?"

"That's right. Now what do you see?"

"The darkness is disappearing. There's a very bright light swelling up in the center of my eyes. It's getting even brighter. And now there's a kind of crisscross pattern coming up from inside the light, like a diamond meshwork with luminous squares."



"Good. Release the pressure for a few seconds, but keep your eyes closed. Now, press again and tell me what you see."

"I see wavy lines this time—lots of them. Colored lines, bright blues and greens. They're sliding across my eyes from left to right. Reminds me of tripping on acid."

"Okay. Now take your fingers away, open your eyes and focus them quickly on the white wall over there. Can you still see any of the wavy lines?"

"You're right, I can."

What is taking place is a demonstration of phosphene hallucinosis conducted by Dr. Gerard Oster, professor of biophysics at Mount Sinai School of Medicine in New York. Essentially, phosphene vision is what the followers of Sat Guru Maharaj Ji, the erstwhile Perfect Master at 13, used to call the light. When you showed up at a Maharaj ashram, the senior premises would hold you in a no-food state of sensory deprivation for 48 hours, then press down hard on your eyelids and then you'd see the light. They claimed that only the Perfect Master's chosen adepts could administer the light, but, as we now know, anybody with eyes to see and two fingers to jab into them, à la Moe Howard, can enjoy this trippy optical delusion in the privacy of their own home at no cost whatsoever. Truly the spirits rule us. Nobody knows exactly what phosphenes are. The word comes from the Greek *phos* ("light") and *phaino* ("to show"),

by Peter Kaldheim



and means what we see when we're seeing stars." What they might be are sparks of pure energy, light perceived at the moment of its conversion into nervous-system information between the cornea and the brain. Thus, phosphenes may be the behavior of atomic particles as observed by the naked eye: the interface of two worlds, the normal and the nuclear—the fourth dimension. Through phosphenes you can, like Luke Skywalker "switch to hyperspace"—just by closing your eyes or using your head to catch a baseball.

Phosphene images are common to all people, except the congenitally blind. The sophisticated experiments currently being conducted in the laboratories of optic researchers like Dr. Oster is part of a tradition of phosphene research that stretches back at least two centuries.

When Benjamin Franklin was serving as ambassador to France during the eighteenth century, one of the parlor games then popular called for a group of guests to form a circle, clasp hands together and take hold of a static electricity generator. The result was a pleasing electrical boost. One night, Franklin noticed that if you close your eyes when the jolt hits, you see a variety of luminous shapes—flickering filigrees of light and showers of bright sparks.

Since Franklin's discovery that phosphenes can be electrically induced, most phosphene research has employed electrical stimulation in one form or another. Alessandro Volta, father of the volt, discovered that phosphenes are produced only at the making and breaking of the electrical circuit, not during the time of current flow. Volta also found that the easiest way to induce phosphenes electrically is by placing electrodes at the temples. In one of Volta's experiments he moistened one hand and took hold of an electrode with it. He then touched the other electrode to his forehead, producing a "light, moderately bright... [that] appears like a luminous circle, under which figure it presents itself also in several other experiments."

In the early part of the nineteenth century, the Bohemian physiologist Jan Purkyně found that by applying one electrode to his forehead and another to his mouth, while making and breaking the current with a string of metal beads, he could produce a fairly steady flow of phosphenes. Purkyně's interest in phosphenes, like Dr. Oster's, apparently had its roots in deeper questions concerning the nature of human consciousness. In an essay on the physiology of the eye, Purkyně wrote: "The eye, by its uninterrupted relation to the brain, appears to be a special organ of fantasy."

A more recent contributor to our understanding of phosphenes was the late Max Knoll, a German scientist best known as one of the builders of the electron microscope. In his laboratory in

Munich, Knoll employed modern electrical equipment (a square-wave generator) to generate a more stable kind of on-off current than Purkyně had been able to produce with his metal beads. Knoll found that by varying the frequency of the electrical pulse administered to his subjects he could change the character of the phosphenes they were seeing. According to Knoll, pulses in the range from 5 cycles per second to 40 cycles per second (the same frequency as brain waves) are the most effective for producing phosphenes. By analyzing sketches drawn by the participants in his experiments, Knoll was able to identify 15 classes of phosphene figures. He also provided evidence which showed that each class of phosphene pattern was linked to a very specific frequency range.

Investigation of the frequency-dependence of phosphenes is currently being continued by Dr. Oster, who has theorized about the causes of that dependence. In an article published in *Scientific American*

**Phosphenes may be
the behavior of
atomic particles as
observed by the naked eye:
the interface of
two worlds, the normal
and the nuclear—
the fourth dimension.**

several years ago, Oster wrote:

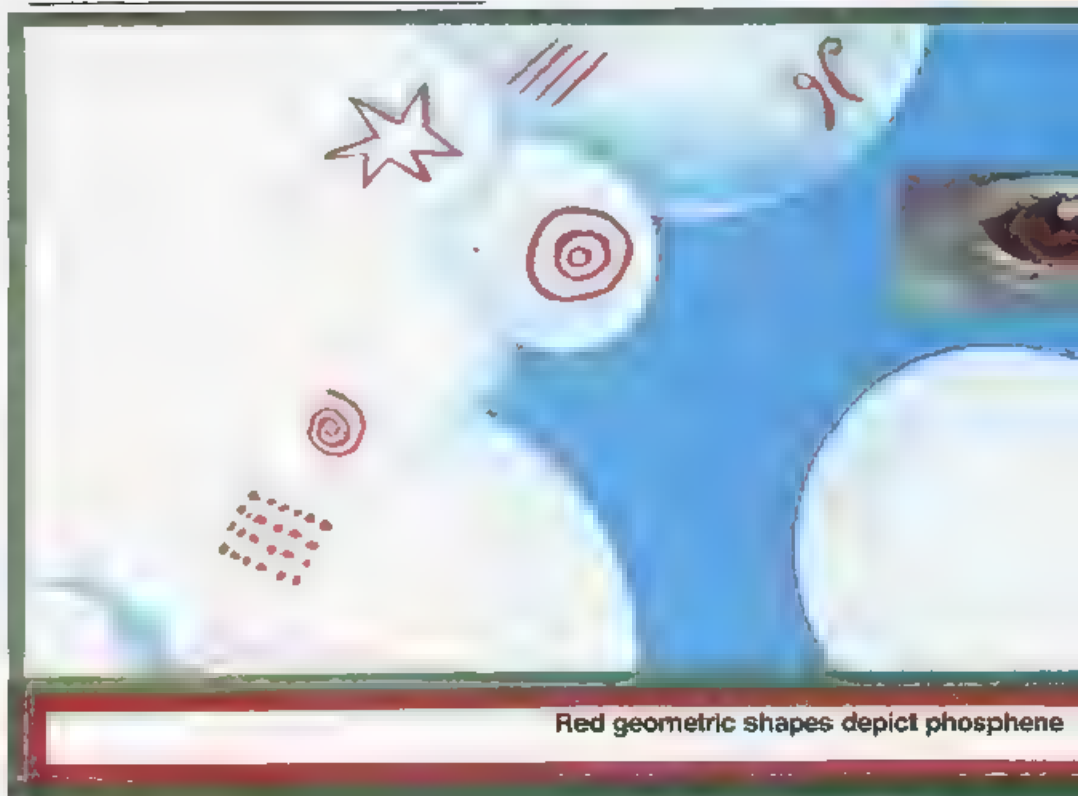
The frequency dependence of phosphenes' form is suggestive of some kind of resonance phenomenon, with different groups of nerve cells acting together when they are driven electrically at a certain rate.

Much of the evidence gathered by Oster seems to support his resonance theory. He discovered that the flickering phosphenes produced by electrical stimulation disappear if the frequency of the electrical pulse exceeds 40 cycles per second. Oster described the eerie visual effect that takes place when the critical frequency is surpassed. "The phosphenes suddenly disappear, leaving one with a feeling of being alone in space."

All the research into the nature and function of phosphenes so far has produced no clear and complete understanding of the hows and whys of these subjective images. But even the partial picture now available is filled with important and often fascinating details about this visual phenomenon. It is known that there are a variety of non-electrical causes for phosphenes. You don't necessarily have to wire your temples to a Lionel train transformer to give yourself a phosphene show.

One obvious method of seeing stars is to administer a sharp blow to the head. Vacationing in Paris several years ago, Dr. Oster discovered that a relatively safe way to bring on a phosphene show was to hit himself on the back of the head with a French bread.

Other causes of phosphenes are migraine headaches and alcohol. Alcoholics who have progressed to the stage of delirium tremens are especially susceptible



Red geometric shapes depict phosphene

which helps to explain the tendency of delirium tremens victims to see "spiders" and other shapes where they really don't exist. Of course, the most venerable method of inducing phosphenes is a method widely practiced before the first scientific laboratory was even imagined—stimulation with psychoactive chemicals. As Oster says, "Phosphenes appear to be a significant feature of psychedelic intoxication." Indeed

Although hallucinogenic drugs were not employed in scientific research on phosphenes until Max Knoll first administered LSD to some participants in his experiments, "unscientific" awareness of the relationship between psychedelics and phosphenes goes back practically to prehistory. The literature of psychedelics drugs, from the Rig-Veda to Leary, contains an abundance of similar descriptions of what can only be phosphene imagery. A typical example of such a description is the following passage from Heinrich Klüver's classic *Mescal and Mechanisms of Hallucinations*. After swallowing peyote buttons for the first time, Klüver reported seeing.

.. clouds from left to right through optical field. Tail of a pheasant (in center of field) turns into bright yellow star, star into sparks. Moving scintillating screw; "hundreds" of screws. A sequence of rapidly changing objects in agreeable colors. A rotating wheel in the center of a silvery ground.

Not surprisingly, subjects who received hallucinogens in Knoll's experiments reported "visions" similar to Klüver's, leading Knoll to conclude that small amounts of hallucinogenic drugs, such as LSD, produce phosphene images that are dramatically "more elaborate."

Writing in Timothy Leary's *Psychedelic Review* in 1968, Oster described his experiment with LSD and the insights he gained about the nature of phosphenes while under the influence of the drug. During the course of his six-hour trip, he studied a number of moiré patterns that were projected onto a white wall by means of an overhead projector. Moiré patterns are "figures produced by the overlapping of two or more families of lines; the locus of points of intersection form the moiré pattern." Oster's observations led him to conclude that all vision has a circular pattern superimposed on it by the curved nerve fibers surrounding the retina of the eye. Under normal conditions, we are not aware of the pattern created by these nerve fibers, but psychedelic drugs make us aware of this circular "screen" by means of the moiré effects it creates when we open our eyes and look at objects in the real world. In other words, the pattern of lines in the eye's "screen" interacts with the lines formed

**Dr. Oster discovered
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French bread.**

by the objects we are viewing to cause the shimmering, dynamic quality

Anyone who has visited an exhibition of op art paintings by artists such as Vasarely, Bridget Riley, Larry Poon or Gerald Oster (that's right, he's also a well-regarded op artist) is likely to be familiar with moiré patterns. In fact, the techniques of op art are a direct outgrowth of what optic research has taught us about the functioning of the human eye. The 1965 "Responsive Eye" exhibit at New York's Museum of Modern Art—the first major exhibition of op art paintings—was a veritable supermarket of phosphene imagery. The artists represented in the exhibit manipulated lines and colors in their paintings so as to create works of art that are exercises in pure perception. In the words of the "Responsive Eye" catalog, "by creating special optical effects (but on a flat surface!) we remove it from the outside world and take it into that terra incognita between the cornea and the brain."

The op art painters of the Sixties were hardly the first artists to delve into that terra incognita and return with phosphene-based images, however. Examples of phosphene shapes can be found in artwork from such divergent sources as prehistoric cave paintings in Almeria, Spain, and woven tapestries from Peru's Incan civilization. The basic 15 phosphene shapes identified in the course of Max Knoll's research can be seen in the folk art of many different cultures, from prehistory to the present. The importance of phosphenes in the development of art is a topic that has not yet been thoroughly explored. But as Dr. Oster says, "Art historians might well consider the possible effects of phosphenes as an 'intrinsic source of inspiration for men of many different societies when they are speculating on relations and cross-influences among primitive societies.'"

Much remains to be explained about the mystery of phosphenes and their connection to the complex functioning of the human brain, but even the knowledge we now have of these internal light shows holds enormous implications for our understanding of awareness and perception.

In Carlos Castaneda's *Tales of Power* the sorcerer don Juan says that humans are "luminous beings" made up of "luminous fibers" but that most humans are not attuned to noticing this condition. Nonsense, most rational people would say. Yet one of the important implications of the knowledge gained from phosphene research is certainly that we are indeed capable of planes of awareness that go beyond what now passes for "normal" perception. It has often been acknowledged that our awareness of the external world is conditioned by the limits of our sense perceptions. By expanding these limits, we expand our world. ■



design motifs as identified by Max Knoll.

Murder on the Opium

Five desperate men, one beautiful woman—which was the killer?

by Leslie Morrison



Shortly before Saigon fell to the National Liberation Front of Vietnam in 1975, *High Times* correspondent Leslie Morrison found himself bottlenecked in Danang, where the course of the "Thai stick trail" had led him in search of an exclusive interview with the king of the G.I. pot smugglers. Morrison never caught up with his man and had to evacuate Danang several hours later, in the manner recounted below. His accurate account of the smugglers' airlift out of Vietnam had to wait several years before we could print it without blowing several people's covers. The "Opium Express" was an actual pipeline that furnished the United States and Australia with several billion dollars' worth of various kinds of dope from 1962 until the NLF victory in 1975. Otherwise, all names have been changed to protect the guilty.

The Damned of Danang

The bartender at the press club didn't bat an eyelash when the trench-coated, Mao-buttoned mook stepped to the bar and flashed a card that said Saigon Daily News in three or four languages, one of which read from right to left. He didn't have any eyelashes to bat, anyway, since they'd been burned right off his epicurean folds in a napalm raid on his cave. "Not even have bats now," the bartender would tell us mournfully.

But I had more serious problems on my mind. Danang was about to fall. I was covering the scene for *Argonaut* when I got overstoned in an opium den. The road was closed. Now I was trapped. I'd heard I might be able to get aboard a weird private airlines by coming to this bar.

"Chink want a drink," the Saigon Daily News stranger said, using the code phrase. He also was told, Dropping six copper-

coins on the counter, he studied them carefully before asking for a River Pass, the Early Snow.

"Water!" snorted Captain Andy, while the bartender mixed the water-on-the-rocks. Veteran correspondents from Saigon to Cam Ranh had warned me that the Cam Ranh was no the usual, heated water like a sinner hated Sunday. Perhaps it stemmed from his days at the helm, before he took to flying. No one knew how he'd come to Danang—he claimed he'd been cast afloat by a plane crash in the China Seas and swam ashore, which would have been plausible if they'd had airplanes in the Miocene era.

"Water!" he repeated. "I've seen it before, and every time I thought it would be the last. I'll never forget those nights in the embassy compound, with every white man fit for duty down to his last highland of port, and the Boxers rinsed to the gills on H₂O. I've known Manchurian lords whose thirst made Admiral Doenitz

Express

"Rain means violence, as in *A Hard Rain's A-Gonna Fall*."
—A.J. Webberman in *The Concordance*



look like Charlie the Tuna. Sure, any male, mark my words, when the Con take over there'll be one hell of a bath.

"Come, come, sit, you judge men too harshly," Mr. Beerstein, the airline proprietor, chuckled lightly, as the Captain lowered his snout into his glass of Old Congo. "The sea is a harsh mistress, but none, I think, will be so uncharitable as to forbid the lesser breed of landlubber his meekly foaming draft water." Shuffling his enormous girth in the groaning chair, Mr. Beerstein knocked the flakes of ash out of his opium pipe and proceeded to refill the ivory bowl with fresh aliment. "Food for thought, this," he muttered.

"Well, Mr. Beerstein, I've sailed or flown the seven seas for nigh on thirty year, man an' boy, and I've never wanted more than a yardarm and a cask of Old Congo to stay afloat. And as for that Hindoo hasheesh percolating in your pipstern, I'd like to remind you that it's nothing more nor less than the smell of

Satan's own sulphur pit when you blow it
in my masthead. It gives me the fantods."

"Yak dung, sir. Yak dung, I say," Mr. Beerstein said, for his decades of experience as a merchant here had given him a rich command of Eastern proverbs. He looked the Captain squarely in the eye, and the Captain stared back. It looked as if each would momentarily have a pipe or a potation to wipe off his face, when in barged Nubsy Grogan, the Captain's copilot behind a fatigued Gial in a gale and, at the moment, in a coolie's flat straw chapeau. Briskly limping on his wooden leg, Grogan made his way to the Captain's side, "Brought you some dope, Cap., or, I mean, something."

"Not now, Nubsy," said the Captain, still eyeball to eyeball in mental mortal combat with the corpulent ex-convict.

"But Captain, there's a wee bit o' Ho Chi Minh around the town. Bomblin' an' shellin' they are, mook lawkins. They'll be

by dawn, so the word is, loosmullins.org.

"I don't want to hear this," snapped Beerstein. "Fuck 'em."

Suddenly we were plunged into darkness as a bomb crashed into the floor of the hotel. When the smoke cleared, Beerstein and the Captain were still staring and glowering, but there was a new object of their visualizing. It was a handsome, blond-haired Viking of a man, clad in denim and buckskin, hair down to his brawny shoulders and a trail-worn pair of saddlebags on his lap. His spurs gleamed dully in the murky light, and he looked back at neither of them, but sat smiling behind his opaque aviator glasses.

"Mr. Beerslein, I presume?" he said at last.

Beerstein inclined his head gravely.
 "I am an emissary of the Dudenhood."
 "Not the Dudenhood of Eternal Good
 Vibes?"

Well, actually, of Eternal Bad Vibes.

"Same thing, though."

"Yeah, right," assented the stranger.

"What is your name, young man?"

"I have many names. My name is Might Have Been."

"Come, come, sir," snapped Beerstein, "don't waste our time. The Vietcong will engulf this city in a matter of hours, perhaps sooner, and these other gentlemen and myself have some important transactions to negotiate. Please state your business."

"I shall be brief. My employers have entrusted me with a valuable commodity which I must convey to Laguna Beach within the next 72 hours or face dire consequences. I understand that the sole nonofficial means of transportation out of this beleaguered provincial capital is a dowdy aircraft owned by yourself and known by a facetious name."

"It is indeed true that I, Ernst Stavro Beerstein, am the proprietor of the so-disant Opium Express, and these gentlemen have booked their passage on my modest cargo plane—the last passages available, I might add, since the Opium Express will no longer dock at Danang when it becomes a communist stronghold, the Marxist-Leninist mooks being notorious puntans in matters narcotic. However, room can always be found for a minion of the Dudehood."

"Your hostility to the working people's cause is well known, but of little interest to us at the present moment, Beerstein. I must leave Danang tonight. My mission depends upon it, and besides that I don't want the commies to chop me up for one of their atheist rites. I will require a seat on the Opium Express. The Dudehood will not forget. Do you fear for your poppy trade on the upper Mekong? The Dudehood's word is not without weight in Hanoi."

"Very interesting, Mr. Whatever-your-name-is," said Beerstein, lighting his pipe and settling back into his chair. "But I conduct business on a cash basis."

"Regrettably, my funds are somewhat diminished at the moment," the stranger said.

"Ah, then it is a pity, but you will have the chance to see the Vietcong enter the citadel. What a rare historical moment! I envy you, my boy." There was a burst of flak outside, and several bodies fell out side the door.

"You will not reconsider?"

"Er," hesitated Beerstein. "Well, now that you mention it, there is one point whose clarification might help us out here. You, er, were saying something about a valuable, er, commodity, I believe you, er, said?"

"Forget it, Beerstein," said the stranger, standing up and tossing his saddlebags over his shoulder. "My ass would be grass if I ever let a gram of this slip into the fingers of a fifth-rate smack czar like you. This is the Thai oil that's going to make cocaine look like mustache wax, if I can

get it back to the states."

"Get a dringible," jeered Beerstein.

The stranger snatched Beerstein's pipe and poked the stem into his gut. "Maybe I will .. gasbag." Then, with a roar of thunder and a sound of clattering hoofbeats, he was gone.

I followed at a discreet distance.

The Regrettable Incident at Airstrip Nine

Sprawling face down in the mud on the Street of the Donkeys, I looked around, expecting to see a VC in pajamas and pantyhose coming down on me with a rusty bayonet. But the smiling figure of the Dudehood man just stretched out an arm and helped me up, brushing the dust from my trousers. "Sorry I had to do that, bro. But it was the best way to get your attention."

**"This is
the Thai oil
that's going
to make cocaine
look like mustache wax
when I
get it back
to the states."**

"Not a bad way, either, I've got to admit," I said, working my arms back into their sockets. "What makes you think I don't work for Beerstein?"

"Your vibes."

"Good?"

"No, bad."

"Same thing, though."

"Yeah, right," he said. "That's basic Dudehood training: when in doubt, talk backwards. We also learn karate, kung fu, Tai Chi, boxing, wrestling, debating and drinkin' tea wit de pinkie extended ever so politely."

"Was that one of Leary's ideas?"

No, J. Edgar's. However, enough of this Company chitchat. I'm headed for the frantic, doomed attempt at a mass exodus at Airstrip Nine. Care to come along?"

"Well, just to watch," I said cautiously. "I'm flying Air Beerstein tonight, but I'll keep you covered."

"Solid. The name's Mitchell Cohen, by the way, dope smuggler on behalf of the working People's International by trade. What's your sign?"

I told him, and explained that I was covering the Yankee rout for the troop sheet in Bangkok: the Thai Himes. Cautiously we made our way through the crowd to the airstrip.

Everything was chaos there. Hell had broken loose, and all of crippled, widowed and orphaned Danang seemed to be trying to barge its way to Saigon aboard the lone 747 which stood gleaming in the sun like a beached white whale. At

the door stood a man in a business suit, shouting orders, but his words were lost on the screaming, wailing clouds of derelict citizens and Montagnards incited to panic by 70 million years of propaganda about the horrors of the Vietcong.

Then, at the north end of the airstrip, toward which the silver nose of the plane pointed, there was a series of explosions, followed by the screams of the dying. It was not the first time the ARVN troops had turned on their own people. Screams and wailing cut through my brain like bullets, as the elite "Black Panther" corps went berserk, hacking up mothers and wives with submachine-gun fire, machetes, abandoned crutches, Swiss utility knives, canned tuna fish and rhino whips as thick as telephone cables, clearing a way for itself to the airplane that couldn't even carry as many people as were already aboard. Shrieking, the crowd turned and ran off in all directions. The 747 taxied off in the general direction of Saigon, and Mitchell Cohen turned around and asked me if I was all right. A light rain was starting to fall.

"Well, pretty good," I said. "Of course, I'm not getting any younger, and I don't really go in as much for this strenuous massacre dodging the way I used to, but on the whole I'd say the old ticker is still in there punching, and this old war-horse is still fit as a fiddle, spry as a mountain goat and twice as ornery. Now, these kids today .."

He grabbed me and threw me against a wall as a grenade exploded where we'd been standing, scattering baby bones all over the debris. "Now look," he said to me, looking in my eyes with his deep blue orbs. "I've got to get back to the states in three days, and I'm going to have to go out of here with you and Beerstein. I'm going to need your help. Being a dope smuggler isn't a glamorous job, but it's a job and—"

We ran all the way to the deserted bamboo lean-to on the outskirts of town where the Opium Express came in for repairs. Beneath the noses of the Danang police, Beerstein conducted his half of the Southeast Asia hop trade out of here. There were bales of opium being loaded for transshipment to factories in Mexico City, where they'd be rendered into pure fine shit. Beerstein's men were busily loading them aboard the twin-engine, primeval penguin that would carry us all to free enterprise, free speech, free press and free worship. It looked less like a tin can than a burned-out toaster, but then we were standing close. Oil dripped from two engines that looked like heaps of blackened, battered Spam cans. The rain was still falling. Captain Andy, chewing tobacco, greeted us gloomily.

"Feel the same way about rain as I do about water," he ruminated.

"Are you flying out too, Cap'n, sir?"

"Murder to send a boy up in a crate like that," said the Captain, glancing up at the sagging tinderbox. "Seen seaworthier

vessels at Coney Island. But I'm going. Can't take a chance of being caught by these commie hens. They'll be madder'n wet Cong.

"Ah, Mr. Cohen," said Beerstein, advancing from behind the belly of the plane, which was carrying enough cargo to make it creak and sag like Mr. Beerstein himself. "I see you have decided to take advantage of our little 'pay now, fly later' plan." He giggled.

Not so fast, Beerstein. I'm only flying with you because the customary means of confused mass retreat have become temporarily congested. My offer is still open: you fly me out of here and the Dudehood will buy you out for a fair price when we get to San Francisco. Think it over, Beerstein. Your route won't be worth a dime bag when the Cong move into this town and shoot out the lights. Our way, you retire rich.

Beerstein sighed amiably. "Ah, Mr. Cohen, so you've divined my little secret. Yes, this is my last bow. After this flight, which will be hasty but not I must add unprofitable, I intend to settle down indeed—a little house in Palm Beach, a rose garden. . . . But keep your money, Mr. Cohen. The Dudehood is generous with its funds—and with its forks. I have no intention of being paid off like poor Miss Tate. No, Mr. Cohen, I want the Thai oil you're carrying."

Cohen clutched his saddlebags and glared at Beerstein. Then, to my surprise, he assented.

"All right, Beerstein, you'll have your Thai oil. When we get to San Francisco."

"That's not nearly good enough, Mr. Cohen. I'll have it now if you please, sir."

He advanced, stretching out his hand. Then he stopped. Cohen's hand was at his throat. There was a knife in Cohen's hand I've seen some bad blades in my time, but Cohen's cut the cake. It was a nine-inch switchblade as thin as a pencil but as hard as Mount Rushmore. I tingled all over.

You drive a hard bargain, Mr. Cohen," said Beerstein. The sweat was pouring off him in buckets. "Shall we say . . . er in Saigon?"

"All right." The blade vanished, leaving a long, red weal on three chins, all of them Beerstein's.

"Now," said Beerstein, turning around. "let's get this plane loaded! Chop chop!"

Beerstein turned back to us, taking my hand and leading us to the gangway. "Shall we meet the others?" he said.

A Curious Caravanserai

The interior of the plane was a hotbed of migraine. Cigarette smoke stung my eyes and the gathering monsoon was represented by little puddles on the floor and in the creases of our clothing. There were six others, not counting the burly Montagnard stokers who were getting on with the loading. Nubsy Grogan was there in his sopping kill, sitting atop a crate. He had taken off

his wooden leg and was rubbing his nub. Next to him sat a glorious girl with a mole on her right cheek. Her fur coat was bedraggled with rain but her blond hair was dry and shining. She was smoking Gargases nervously, flicking off ashes faster than they appeared. Beside her sat a distinguished-looking fellow with a pointy little mustache and a monocle. A Trichinopoly protruded from his mouth. Finally there was, of all people, our old friend from the press bar, the Saigon Daily News man, his black oily hair slunk in place and his steel-rim glasses, perfectly round, completely clouded with moisture. Then there were Beerstein, Cohen, the Captain and me. What a strangely assorted bank of wayfarers on the edge of the world I mused.

"Lady and gentlemen," Beerstein said, please do not rise. I am happy to inform you that we have among us an unexpected but most welcome addition to our little troop: Mitchell Cohen, in the service of the Dudehood of Eternal Good Vibes."

"Bad vibes, old boy," corrected Cohen. "Yes, quite so. Same thing. Moreover the cargo is loaded, the pilot is sober and the Opium Express flies within the hour."

As if to confirm his words, the engines began to roar and backfire, spitting flame, oil and gasoline. "Just the usual warm-up. Don't pay any attention, please," said Beerstein.

"Has this old crate seen a mechanic in the last 40 years, Beerstein?" Cohen wanted to know.

"A lady on board means trouble sure, hooch dawkins," muttered Nubsy.

"She's a good ship and true, gentlemen, I assure you," said Beerstein confidently.

The Opium Express is the fastest, safest civilian plane in Southeast Asia. However, enough of this aeronautical discourse. We must settle in now for a lengthy flight. Shall we become acquainted? I believe you all know the Captain and his colorful first mate, Mr. Grogan. Of course this is Mr. Cohen. This attractive young lady is, she informs me, none other than the famous Groupiesinskaya."

Of course—Groupiesinskaya, the famous Soviet defector who'd switched from Bolsheviks to rock n' rollers. She

was a camp follower of any glitter kid with a gold record and anything else beneath his or her belt. Beautiful blond and bisexual, her unquenchable thirst for strange drugs and strange druggies, in that order, was legendary. She'd disappeared from view months ago, along with her paramour of the moment, Alex Cooper, the no less notorious composer of *Income Tax Blues* and other rock operations. The newspapers had searched for them for months in vain.

"Ms. Groupiesinskaya sought my help recently when she and Mr. Cooper returned from a tour of battlefields in Cambodia," continued Beerstein. "At least she did. Mr. Cooper had the ill fortune to meet with a squad of hungry Montagnards near Cam Ranh."

Groupiesinskaya shuddered perceptibly.

"Leave her alone, Beerstein!" snapped Cohen. "Can't you see what she's been through?"

She looked at him thankfully. Beerstein guffawed.

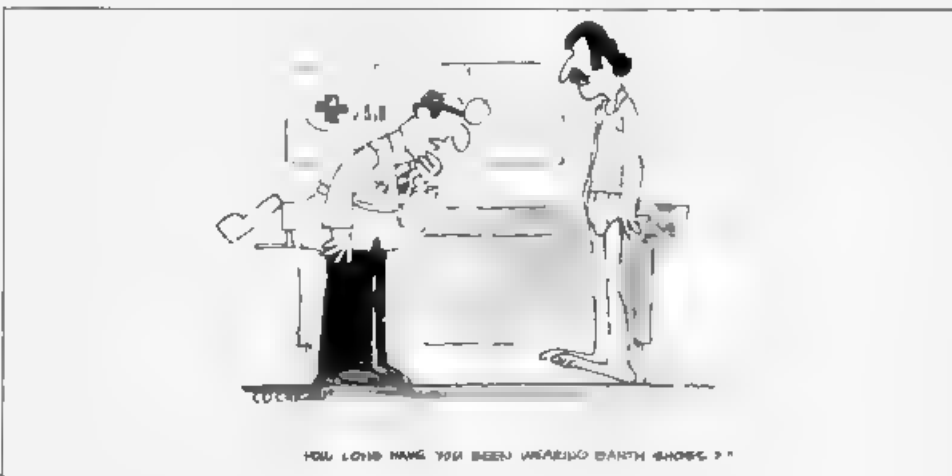
Your concern is touching, Mr. Cohen. However, our distressed refugee is amply provided with medicament for what ails her. And now, I would like you to meet another illustrious passenger—Herr Wessel von Leinsdorf, military attaché of the Baader-Meinhof Ironvorkergruppen. Herr von Leinsdorf has offered his firm's invaluable services to the Vietcong, but certain political exigencies have arisen making it necessary for him to leave the country precipitately and, like the rest of us, clandestinely. Aloha, and welcome to our flight, mein Herr."

"Danke," said the Hun.

"Danke schon," said Beerstein. "And now, Captain Andy, I believe that you have already had the advantage of me in meeting the distinguished Saigon Daily News war correspondent, Minh Huac. San East of Suez gentlemen, comrade San's dispatches are read with the greatest interest. Let me tell you, however, that comrade San is in fact an impostor."

San started as everyone stared at him.

"Yes, my friends, comrade San is in reality Tri Vo Lunm, the master spy of the Hanoi regime, which has paid his fare



every month, in the event of such a contingency as the present one arising. His information will soon permit the Vietcong to enter Danang, but he will not, alas, be there to greet them. If our gallant South Vietnamese allies find Monsieur Tri, there will be no time wasted on a court-martial as he knows."

"C'est bien assez Monsieur," said Tri, unpinning his Mao button. "Do not let your open mouth dig your grave."

"And now," said Beerstein, sitting down on a rickety heroin crate and taking out his pipe. "I suggest that we settle in for what promises to be a most bracing takeoff."

Beerstein's Flying Circus

We flew in total darkness. Only the instrument panel in the cockpit was lighted, while in the cabin the crimson glow of Beerstein's pipe seemed to hover in the air like a smile. The roar of the engines and the occasional choke were deafening, so I made my way aft to the cargo hold and tried to fall asleep on a tarpaulin. I was just nodding out when I heard a couple of voices near me. Listening closely, I could just make out the voices of the communist spy and the German arms smuggler.

"Zo, my friend, we meet in ze aeroplane. How ironic, nein?"

"So it is, mon vieux," said the Vietnamese. "And tell me, how are the shipments going?"

"Ah, they are not so well. My friends fear for my safety. If I cannot give them some public guarantee of my safety, the shipments to Hanoi will be terminated."

"We will be in Saigon in a few hours."

"Indeed we shall, but I wonder, comrade, how good that will be for each of us. Neither of us are exceedingly popular with our worthy American foes, nor with their egregious ally, the puppet Thieu."

"No good can come of this. Only our simultaneous arrival in Hanoi can expedite matters. And if I read our friend Beerstein aright, there is the twinkle of a dual ransom in his eyes. And, for the nonce, we are in his power."

"We can only sit in the cabin and watch our chances."

The engine barked and sputtered.

"Ah, mon vieux, the rotating motion of the iron bird has thrown me once more into your virile Aryan arms. Oh, kiss me, Wessel, and then we will return together to Beerstein's vile parlor."

"Ach, mein Tri, one day all Vietnam will be a German worker's paradise where every proletarian will be free to pursue their choice of sexual partners. Until that day, we must fight."

"Arm in arm."

"Comrade."

"Darling."

"Will you clowns pipe down?" I yelled. "I'm trying to get some shut-eye."

There was a silence, and I floated off to

drowsyland again. I was just dreaming I was a happy little kid again when I was awakened by a girl's gentle sobbing.

"This is the price of your passage, my pretty prawn," came Beerstein's voice. "Embrace me, you little Russian bitch, or it's out the hatch with you!"

"Please—nyet, nyet," Groupiesinskaya pleaded tearfully. "Please, I will pay you, Mr. Beerstein. I—have—friends—rich friends—they will pay you." She pronounced "rich" and "will" like a Mexican. "Please Mr. Beerstein. Nyet—not this."

"Your friends won't suck on this for you, you hot Slavic slut," Beerstein gloated. An evil apparition of him grew in my mind. "You'll bite my crank with your pearly Tartar teeth or I'll—"

"Unhand her, Beerstein!" came Cohen's commanding voice. "This woman has friends in the Dudehood. The Dudehood will pay for her transportation."

**She was beautiful,
blond and bisexual,
a camp follower of
any glitter kid
with a gold record
and anything else
beneath his
or her belt.**

"Well, burn my bankbooks," said Beerstein. There was a metallic sound of trousers being quickly zippered. "You have a powerful protector, my dear. But remember—Beerstein can be a powerful enemy."

"Oh boo hoo," sobbed Groupiesinskaya as the mook sped to the front of the cabin. Mitchell Cohen embraced her in his powerful dope-legger's arms.

"What's happening, sweetness?" he said gently. "Is that old cube hassling you?"

"Aw, I'm all right," she said. "Do you see a little bag of white powder around here somewhere?"

"Just like a woman," chuckled Cohen. Always wanting to powder her nose. At a time like this. He chuckled heartily.

"I want to powder my veins, darling."

"What's this little bag of powder here? Is it what it looks like?"

"Let me see that, you angel... no, no, this isn't it," she said with an air of disappointment. "It's just my plaster of Paris."

"What?"

"It's my plaster of Paris. I use it in my work," she said proudly. "I'm a very well-known groupie, you know. Er, got any gum?"

"No."

"Christ, I need a shot."

"Baby, what you need is a couple of inches of Doctor Cohen's Meat Injection."

"Oh"

Forty minutes later, he was explaining. "So you see, this saddlebag contains the only copy of the formula of the Dudehood's new hash oil—plus a few samples. If I can get this back to the Coast without any hassle, it'll mean inexpensive, good dope for every kid on the street within our lifetimes. It was developed by Nepalese hash doctors and carried over the Himalayas by elephant, and I brought it this far. Now my main problem is to find some money to pay off Beerstein."

"Gee," said Groupiesinskaya reverently. "I wonder where you can find some. I mean scoring on an airplane is such a hassle."

"Well, I think I know."

"What?"

"Where I can score some money."

"Oh."

"Listen, honey, it's about time you kicked. Give me your smack, and we'll use it to pay Beerstein. It's for your own good. Remember, being a dope smuggler isn't glamorous work, but it's a job and somebody's got to do it. There are kids back in America counting on us, and we can't let them down. It may not be today or tomorrow, but they can't take tonight away from us."

"All right, Mitchell. Take my stash. Just promise me two things."

"Sure, baby, anything. What?"

"What?"

"I said, What?"

"Oh, yeah, hold me when I start crying, and..."

"Yeah?"

"And don't be strange."

They made their way forward again, and once again I nestled into my tarpaulin for 40 much-needed winks. Dope smuggler, pope smugglers—it was all a lot of hokey to me. Groupies, hash oil, Nepalese nickel nurses, midnight seductions... nothing but a megalomaniac Mesopotamian madhouse if you ask me. With these thoughts running through my head, I was listening to the hypnotic sound of raindrops on the fuselage, and I didn't consciously notice the tarp stretch and shake as it took three hundred additional pounds of flesh coming down on it. It was Ernst Stavro Beerstein, quivering like jelly and acting friendlier than I liked to see.

"Avoirdupois avec moi, ce soir?" came Beerstein's violet-scented basso profundo.

I was never going to get any sleep.

The Rains Came

The monsoon was pouring full tilt when we taxied up to the little palmetto structure that served as a deplaning station at the discreet private airstrip a few miles out of Saigon. Beerstein's natives had assembled themselves around the plane by the time we dropped the ladder, and they were already unloading the hold as we started to run for the shelter of the hut.

(continued on page 78)

BACK TO SCHOOL

High school's over, but not for this kid. He's going to parlay that chunk of wood into a year's tuition and maybe a few dollars to take in a talkie with Betty and Veronica. Whether you're in Harvard or in kindergarten, you can fail every test, but you'll never flunk lunch if you smoke a well-balanced nutritional meal—O







This Is YOUR LIFE!



As documented by government and private agencies you never dreamed were peeking. by George O'Toole

Harry J. Murphy was very good at his job, which happened to be investigating people for the Central Intelligence Agency. If the CIA was considering you for a career position or a temporary assignment, they'd give your name to Murphy or one of his coworkers in the agency's Office of Security. When Murphy got through with you the CIA would know more of your life history than you did yourself.

Murphy knew where to go to find out about you—not just the obvious places like the IRS, the Social Security Administration or Selective Service, but the truly arcane sources of personal information. If you carved gravestones, for example, Murphy knew your credit rating would be listed in the *Memorial Red Book*. If you raised chickens, he knew there might be a file on you at the Department of Agriculture's Poultry Division. If you sold wine in New Jersey, he knew he could find your photograph and a list of your former employers on your state license application. If you were a doctor, Murphy might start with the *AMA Directory*; if you were a lawyer, he'd turn to the *Martindale-Hubbell Law Directory*; and if you happened to be an Indian chief that was no problem for Murphy—he knew there was plenty about you on the tribal roll at one of the field offices belonging to the Bureau of Indian Affairs.

Murphy learned all this know-how through experience; after years on the job he was a walking encyclopedia. Most of his expertise was in his head, and the CIA must have realized that when Murphy retired, he'd be taking it with him. In 1965 he was given a leave of absence and a federal fellowship to go to the Brookings Institution and write it all down. It took him a year, and the result was a 452-page handbook for government paper chasers called *Where's What*.

Where's What is the snoop's Baedeker. It's a guidebook for a tour through 6,723 different record systems maintained by the federal government, which contain a total of 3.9 billion files, or an average of 18 files for every man, woman and child in the United States. And it's also a handbook for the countless dossiers compiled by state, county and municipal governments. But *Where's What* is by no means limited to information files collected by government; nearly 40 percent of Murphy's catalog of information sources is devoted to personal data depots operated by the private sector. Even at that *Where's What* doesn't begin to do justice to the sheer mass of information maintained by businesses and private agencies on individual Americans.

"There are substantially more records kept by the private, or commercial sector than by the federal government," says David F. Linowes, chairperson of the government's Privacy Protection Study Commission. In fact, snooping by private agencies into the lives of Americans rivals government spying on the public and is in many ways much more insidious. Privacy laws and regulations work somewhat to constrain the bureaucrats' lust for personal data, but private snoops are almost totally unregulated as they amass and exchange the same kind of information. Most private sector file fanciers are not the slightest bit reluctant to open their dossiers to police and government investigators. That which cannot be acquired by government gumshoes through official channels is often readily available through the old boy network. The American dossier subculture has become an entity unto itself, spanning government and the private sector. It is almost totally out of control.

Where's What tells how the game is played. Let's say you work for a defense contractor and must apply for government security clearance. When you come to the point in the questionnaire that asks if you've ever been arrested, you answer truthfully and confidently that you have not. The government investigator will check with law enforcement sources and confirm your statement. But if the investigator has paid attention to the trusty *Where's What*, the research probably won't stop there.

"There is a little bit of larceny in everybody's heart," the snoop's handbook advises us. Maybe sometime you tried your hand at shoplifting, it suggests. "Unless the article taken is of some value," notes *Where's What*, "a record of shoplifting will not normally find its way into a police file. [But] department stores have their own clearing houses for shoplifting offenses."

Most major department store chains belong to organizations called retail protective associations. Several New York stores, for example, belong to the Stores Mutual Protective Association. Founded in 1918, the association is reputed to have over half a million files on shoppers or store employees allegedly guilty of theft. Anyone applying for a job in a member store can expect to be rejected if his or her name is in the association's files. And the association's records are reportedly made available to other prospective employers and credit bureaus. Presumably the federal investigator checking your background would have no trouble getting a look at the files of any retail protective

association he or she chooses.

No matter how innocent you are of stealing from stores, your name is probably in such a file if you've ever had a run-in with a store's rent-a-cops. Take the case of a young woman, newly hired by a Boston department store, who was fired when her name turned up in a check with Protective Services, Inc. PSI was a private firm that maintained the same kind of blacklist file kept by retail protective associations. The agency's records showed that five years earlier the young woman had been suspected of trying to steal three pant suits from another store. The woman denied the charge and the store declined to prosecute her, so there was no arrest record or other official record of the incident. But PSI opened a file on her, and five years later it cost her a job. The incident was a violation of the Massachusetts Fair Credit Reporting Act, and ultimately led to the closing of PSI.

Such dossier exchanges present a grotesque caricature of the criminal justice system. The defendant has no rights, while the store's security force acts as police, judge, jury and executioner. For example, a store employee might be accused of theft and summarily dismissed. The store may have no real case against the individual—who may, in fact, be entirely innocent—and it may choose not to prosecute. Thus, ex-employees have no forum in which to present their defense, while former employers are free to brand a person "thief," and with a sentence of life in the retail protective associations' files. The black mark is a time bomb set to go off perhaps years later, when a check into the individual's background turns up the item.

But retail merchants aren't the only people who keep unofficial "rap sheets." Similar to the retail protective associations is a service offered to Nevada gambling casinos by private detective Bob Griffin, a former Las Vegas deputy sheriff. For fees ranging upward of \$1,000 per month, Griffin provides the casinos with a four-inch-thick "black book," containing the names, photographs, descriptions and modus operandi of hundreds of people suspected of crooked gambling. If it includes you, you won't even be let inside a casino to gamble, much less to apply for a job there.

Crooked or honest, if you've ever had anything to do with horse racing beyond the occasional trip to the track or two-dollar bet, there's probably a file on you in the New York City headquarters of the Thoroughbred Racing Protective Bureau. Federal investigators might expect more

than average cooperation from the bureau; about a dozen of its employees are members of the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI.

Racetrack people are also likely to turn up in the files of the venerable Pinkerton's, Inc., which has been providing security for horse racing since the turn of the century, longer than any other private sector outfit. Pinkerton's files are by no means limited to jockeys and touts, however. The private detective firm also claims files on 1.5 million "known criminals." And some of that information comes directly from police records.

The information pipeline between official law enforcement agencies and the private sector flows both ways. Private detective firms like Pinkerton's are often hired by large companies to run background checks on prospective employees, a job that includes finding out if the applicant was ever arrested. In most law enforcement agencies, arrest records are supposed to be confidential. An arrest is not a conviction, and disseminating the fact that someone has been arrested can amount to reaccusing an individual of a charge on which he or she was found innocent. However, most large private sector firms have contacts in police departments ready to furnish arrest records or any other information regarding the applicant they may have on file. Sometimes such cooperation is done as a professional courtesy to a police alumnus working in the private sector. In other cases the information is simply sold by enterprising police officers as a means of supplementing their salaries.

In 1971 a New York City detective was convicted of selling police records to banks, airlines, private detective agencies and other companies. The officer reportedly earned more than \$10,000 per year selling such confidential files. Several of his customers were convicted of "giving unlawful gratuities" and "rewarding official misconduct." Among them were Pinkerton's, the Wackenhut Corporation, the William J. Burns International Detective Agency and the Retail Credit Company.

The last member of this foursome is not, strictly speaking, a private detective agency, as are the other three, although it holds private detective agency licenses in some states. Retail Credit is the leading consumer investigation service in the country and probably the most voracious data grabber in the private sector. The company maintains files on 47 million Americans. If you've ever applied for life, medical or auto insurance, filed a claim against an insurance company, taken out a mortgage or financed a new car, Retail Credit probably has a file on you. And there is a real chance the information in that file is false or defamatory, or both.

● A Caro, Michigan, woman discovered her insurance had been canceled because a Retail Credit report falsely described her as an excessive drinker. She sued and

was awarded \$321,750.

● A Martin, South Dakota, woman inherited some money and used it to purchase a new Chevrolet. She was rejected for automobile insurance by three companies which had received a Retail Credit report implying the money for the car had been earned through prostitution. The woman sued. Retail Credit settled out of court and cleaned up the record.

● A member of the faculty of Princeton University was refused auto insurance by Slate Farm Mutual Insurance Co. when Retail Credit reported, accurately but irrelevantly, that she was living with a man out of wedlock.

● A Retail Credit investigator checking out a California insurance broker talked to one of the man's competitors and got an earful of completely false allegations regarding the subject's honesty. The inves-

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tigator included the calumny in the report and the broker sued for libel. The jury awarded him \$250,000.

It goes on and on, and even allowing for the huge volume of snooping done by Retail Credit, there are enough similar horror stories in the record to suggest there may be something basically wrong with the way Retail Credit goes about its investigations. The major problem seems to be that the company tries to use the techniques of the assembly line to assess the character and worth of human beings.

Detectives and other professional investigators know that the job of digging out and verifying reliable information about anyone is a time-consuming and expensive process. If you were to hire a reputable private investigator to check into the background of some John Doe, you wouldn't expect to hear anything for at least a couple of days. When you did, you'd probably also get a bill for several hundred dollars. But Retail Credit will tell you all about John Doe's solvency and morals at the bargain basement price of five dollars.

How does the company work this inflation-fighting miracle? Mass production is the answer. When the Retail Credit gumshoes start out on their daily rounds, they go armed with a list of persons to be investigated. The list is constructed so

that all the subjects live in the same neighborhood, or at least along some geographically coherent route that permits the gumshoe to minimize travel time. Before calling it a day and heading for the barn, a gumshoe is expected to have investigated and reported on every person on the list. Retail Credit officials say the list averages 16 or 17 names, but former employees put the number as high as 40.

According to company officials, the legperson investigates the 17 people by talking to approximately 40 neighbors, building owners, local merchants or others who profess to know them. The average interview, they say, lasts about ten minutes. In other words, the person from Retail Credit "investigates" you by talking, on the average, to 2.3 people in 23 minutes or so.

Retail Credit was the target of a recent probe by the CBS news program, "60 Minutes." The television reporters interviewed former Retail Credit investigators and even arranged for a journalism student to work undercover and take a job with the company. "60 Minutes" reported that the people Retail Credit investigators list in their reports as sources of information in an investigation often have never even been contacted by Retail Credit.

Given such brief and sometimes imaginary interviewing, it might well be wondered how the Retail Credit investigators can report anything of substance about the people on their lists. Nevertheless they manage to, and four former field men testified to a senate investigating committee that they were given quotas requiring them to turn up derogatory information on from 6 to 10 percent of all insurance applicants. Obviously the harried gossip brokers of Retail Credit are under considerable pressure to come up with some dirt. When none can be found, there must be a strong temptation to invent it.

As a result of the many lawsuits filed against it by its victims, as well as a major action by the Federal Trade Commission, Retail Credit has received a great amount of unfavorable publicity. In order to escape its unsavory reputation, the company has resorted to the same ploy used by many individuals who find themselves afoot of the law; it changed its name. Retail Credit now goes under the name Equifax, Inc. Unfortunately, everything else seems to have stayed the same.

Considering the questionable reliability of the information contained in many credit files, it's surprising that government or police investigators would have any interest in seeing the inside of dossiers compiled by Retail Credit-Equifax or similar consumer investigation services. However, Where's What says such files can be a useful source of leads: the names of neighbors and others allegedly willing to gossip about a person—and specific information such as date of birth or former addresses,

items probably supplied by the subject. A former Retail Credit investigator told me the company routinely made its files available to the FBI and other government investigators. This practice has presumably changed since May 1971, when the federal Fair Credit Reporting Act restricted the information that may be given to government agencies without court order to names, addresses and places of employment. The federal law pertains only to "consumer reporting agencies," however, and in no way limits other private sector information sources.

Insurance companies constitute the largest group of Retail Credit-Equifax's customers. Prudential, for example, does \$5 million in business with the company annually. But the big insurers aren't satisfied with what your next door neighbor or the neighborhood gossip might have to say; they also want to know what your doctor knows. And for this they are likely to turn to outfits like the Chicago-based Factual Service Bureau, Inc.

Suppose you were injured in an automobile accident and filed a claim against the other driver's insurance company. The insurance company wants to know from the outset how much they are likely to have to pay you. But that's impossible to say without a look at your medical records, information that is supposedly protected by the confidentiality of the sacred doctor-patient relationship. And that's where Factual Service Bureau comes in. According to its own sales pitch, it specializes in "securing medical records and information without patient authorization." In plainer language, it steals private medical records.

FSB agents pose as doctors, nurses, welfare workers and sometimes even clergymen in order to work their scam. The fellow decked out in white coat and stethoscope who saunters into a hospital's records office may be a staff doctor on a legitimate errand. On the other hand, he may be a clever FSB agent about to brazenly con a clerk into turning over your folder to him. An NBC news investigative team got hold of a little handbook FSB furnishes its agents, giving them tips on impersonating doctors.

"In introducing yourself, say as little as necessary," quotes NBC from the handbook. "Write down the name of the doctor you are using, to avoid forgetting it," the manual adds.

When not playing doctor, some FSB agents pose as cops, NBC disclosed. The ingenious gumshoes actually figured three separate ways to inveigle their way into the National Crime Information Center, the coast-to-coast computer network operated by the FBI, providing state and local law enforcement agencies with access to hundreds of thousands of arrest records and similar data. Not all police forces are equipped with the computer terminal equipment needed to gain direct entry into the NCIC system. Those with

out such gear rely on neighboring departments to relay their inquiries to the system by telephone. According to NBC, the Denver Police Department and at least four other police forces in Colorado were conned by FSB agents posing as local officers into handling NCIC requests over the phone.

Alternatively, the FSB agents would call a police department, identify themselves as New York City police officers, place their request for information and leave a call-back number—a telephone in FSB's offices in lower Manhattan. When the police department called back with the information, the FSB agent manning the telephone would answer, "One hundred and first precinct." If all else failed, FSB turned to a private investigator in Columbus, Nebraska, who had access to the NCIC system through a friend in the

**If you have ever
written a
letter to the editor,
attended a protest rally
or subscribed
to a radical newspaper,
they may
have started a dossier
on you.**

local police department. FSB would make a flat payment to the person for the information.

FSB's activities in the Denver, Colorado, area attracted the attention of the local authorities and eventually brought it under the scrutiny of the FBI and the IRS. The limelight put a definite crimp in the detective agency's activities, but did little to thwart the theft and sale of confidential medical information by similar outfits. According to Dr. Alfred M. Freedman, president of the National Commission on Confidentiality of Health Records, the Denver affair is "only the tip of a nationwide iceberg."

Ever been called to jury duty? If so, there's a good chance someone built up a dossier on you containing such information as your tax returns, the state of your marriage, your bill-paying methods, personal habits and neighborhood gossip about you. In most large cities specialized investigative firms dig up such information on prospective jurors and sell it to the lawyers representing the plaintiff or the defendant. After poring over your personal life, the lawyers will decide whether you're likely to be disposed towards their clients. If they think not, they'll work to keep you off the jury hearing the case.

In addition to those who traffic in confidential data about your bank bal-

ance, your bedroom and your body, there is yet another category of private sector snoops. Their files are chock-full of information regarding your ideological purity. If you have ever written a letter to the editor, attended a protest rally or subscribed to a radical newspaper, they may have started a dossier on you. The keeping of dossiers on suspected subversives, wrong thinkers and other troublemakers by private and self-appointed guardians of national security is a practice dating back at least to the Thirties, but it reached its peak during the McCarthyite panic of the Fifties. It was during the latter period that one of the largest and most powerful private sector "red squads" was formed—the American Security Council.

The council started out in 1955 as the Mid-American Research Library, a dossier service to a group of member firms that provided its financial support. The library advised them on employees and prospective employees who might not share their free enterprise philosophy. In 1956, ex-FBI agent John M. Fisher left his position in the security department of Sears, Roebuck and Co., one of the charter member firms, and became president and executive director of the library, which soon changed its name to the American Security Council. The ASC augmented its own snooping with the purchase of a one million name file from the estate of the late Harry A. Jung, a notorious anti-Semite who published *American Vigilante*. The ASC staff continued to update the dossier collection with reports from the security departments of member corporations and other rightwing groups, plus names gleaned from the hearings of congressional committees investigating internal security. By the early Seventies the files had blossomed into a gargantuan data collection requiring an index of six million cards.

More than 3,000 dues-paying member firms have full access to the ASC's hoard of information on suspected enemies of the free enterprise system. Among the subscribers are Sears-Roebuck, Lockheed, Motorola, Allstate Insurance, Honeywell, U.S. Steel and General Dynamics, companies whose security staffs are well represented in the FBI's old boy network, the Society of Former Special Agents of the FBI. Some of ASC's most generous support has come from the Schick Safety Razor Company, owned by rightwing millionaire Patrick J. Frawley. Besides helping member companies weed out lefties and other infidels who might apply for work, the ASC carries on a very active lobbying and public relations operation on behalf of such Pentagon pet projects as the antiballistic missile and the B-1 fighter-bomber.

The American Security Council has no monopoly on political dossier-keeping within the private sector. The Western Research Foundation, for

example, was founded nearly ten years before ASC by a group of ex-FBI agents. Western Research was formed to provide the same blacklisting service to a clientele of West Coast-based companies, including the Southern Pacific Railroad, Pacific Gas and Electric, Standard Oil of California and the Hearst newspapers. Some of the names in Western Research's files came from mailing lists and other files snatched by Jerome Ducote, ex-cop and free-lance political burglar, during 17 burglaries he carried out against leftist political and labor groups in California between 1966 and 1968. (Ducote also shared the fruits of his after-hours research" with the American Security Council.) Since 1969 the foundation has been known as Research West, Inc. and is under new management—an ex-cop and his wife. The firm is licensed to operate as a private detective agency, but seems to be carrying on the same kind of work as its predecessor. Research West has been named in a multimillion-dollar libel suit filed by Synanon, Inc., the drug rehabilitation agency.

The supply of such subversive tracking outfits seems to exceed the demand and some of the smaller ones just fade away. A firm in Dayton, Ohio, Agitator Detection, Inc., boasted only a few short years ago of "complete computerized files on every known American dissident," as well as "all 160 million of their friends, relatives and fellow travelers." Now the company's gone from the local telephone directory. In southern California, the Fire and Police Research Association recently folded.

Fi-Po, as it was called, was headed by a former Los Angeles Police Department police officer and was staffed by L.A. police and fire department volunteers. It provided the usual blacklisting service at a charge of \$10 per name check, to such clients as the John Birch Society, as well as a host of corporate subscribers. Fi-Po's files were inherited by the United Community Churches of America of Glendale, California, yet another private sector clearing house for dossiers of the supposedly subversive.

The oldest established private political dossier service in the United States is probably the Church League of America, which was founded in 1937 by a group of Chicago rightwingers and Christian fundamentalists to combat the "communist influence" they perceived among the American clergy. Since the Fifties, the church league has been headed by former Air Force intelligence officer and ordained Baptist minister, Edgar G. Bundy. Although the church league's *bête noire* has always been the liberal National Council of Churches, it reserves an ample supply of vitriol for attacks on people it considers communists, "fellow travelers" or "communist dupes." The Church League boasts that its research library contains the largest and most comprehensive files on subversive activity, with

the single exception of the FBI." The zeal of the league's researchers is described in the organization's brochure.

"The uniqueness of the Church League files is that every name of every person, organization, movement, publication or subject of significance has been put on a reference card with one incident per card, each referring back to the original document in the files. Full-page ads in newspapers, such as the New York Times, calling for the abolition of congressional investigating committees or attacking our security laws, have sometimes carried names running into the thousands. Each one of these names has been carded and indexed with the reason for it appearing in the ad put on the card. Likewise, if an individual made a speech or wrote an

**The private sector
file keepers are free
to collect every sort
of gossip, misinformation
or outright lie
about you, and
there is virtually
no legal rein
on their actions.**

article or book attacking and ridiculing a major doctrine of the Christian faith or the American way of life, that individual's name and the article were each carded."

The league is much more than a clipping and indexing service, however. According to its brochure some of the information in its files was acquired by its "undercover operatives" sitting in on leftist meetings with miniature tape recorders and photographing the participants with tiny cameras. "Copies of file materials were also acquired by Church League agents," the brochure says, "who ingratulated themselves with leftists that accepted their volunteer help to work in various headquarters." Among the services the league offers to its supporters are background checks of suspected leftists and even attempted infiltration of leftwing organizations. For a "contribution" of \$50, the league will give you a full political run-down on up to three of your neighbors.

Lest such offers be taken as the puerile Walter Mitty antics of a bunch of grownups playing counterspy, it should be noted that the league is taken very seriously by some segments of corporate America. The organization has received financial support from such large companies as Abbott Laboratories, Armour and Company, the Greyhound

Corporation, Monsanto Chemical, Borg-Warner and the Celanese Foundation. In January 1977 an official of the Wackenhut Corporation admitted under questioning by the Privacy Protection Study Commission—a panel appointed by the government under the 1974 Privacy Act—that the detective agency sometimes used the Church League's files while conducting background investigations for its corporate clients. Relations between the league and the rightwing rent-a-cop outfit seem, in fact, to be very cordial. Wackenhut recently made a present to the Church League of approximately 700,000 of its political dossiers.

The Church League puts out several publications, including the monthly *News & Views*, and the biweekly *National Layman's Digest*. The latter publication is described by the league as "dealing with individuals, organizations, publications and subjects in religion, education, entertainment, political life and youth groups." In 1969 and 1970 the *Digest* was edited by John Rees, a mysterious figure of the rightwing underground.

In 1968 Rees formed National Goals, Inc., which, according to its incorporation papers, was supposed to "provide an investigative service for various branches of government, state, federal and local, and to prepare memoranda, reports, books, pamphlets and bulletins with respect thereto." Under the National Goals aegis, Rees began publishing a periodical called *Information Digest*, which was distributed by the Church League for a brief period around 1970. The *Digest* was a newsletter concerning the activities of the New Left, labor, civil rights and other movements causing alarm on the Right.

Some of the information in *Information Digest* seems to have come from informers and undercover investigators within these organizations. In 1971, in a move apparently designed to protect such sources, the newsletter ceased general distribution through the Church League and was sent to a limited mailing list of some 40 police red squads and other interested agencies around the country, including the New York State Police, the National Security Agency and the CIA. The November 19, 1971 issue of *Information Digest* issued the following warning:

"It will be apparent to the 40 people now receiving the *Information Digest* that much of the information is obtained by sources active in radical, so-called revolutionary groups. Uncontrolled dissemination of this information can have the most serious consequences. It is requested that you keep *Information Digest* for use within your own organization and do not share it with others. If, in your judgment, material should be disseminated, please do not use it in ID format, scramble and rewrite!"

Rees and his wife, Sheila Louise, may themselves have been two of the under-

(continued on page 76)



Absinthe

At last, a drink that grows hair on your brain

On a slightly chill afternoon in 1867, M. Maurice Andrieu and M. Marcelin Besnouille sit on the terrace of the Café de la Nouvelle-Athenes in the Place Pigalle. Mademoiselle, pale, petite, with pearl earrings and money bangs, has ordered an absinthe, a strong, anise-flavored aperitif. She sits with the tumbler before her, ignoring it, ignoring Monsieur, ignoring tout le monde, through eyes so unfocused there appears to be no one looking out through them. For his part, Monsieur ignores her as well. He sits to her left, looking away, smoking a pipe that has burned out. Clearly, respectable, middle-class individuals, they have simply chosen oblivion over the rest of ours.

Seventeen years later, this innocent encounter will cause a scandal in London. Forty years later, one will not be able to drink absinthe in the Nouvelle-Athenes, nor at any other bistro in Paris, nor in Belgium, Holland, Switzerland, Brazil nor the United States. Nor can you order a shot today of Roger Degas' painting *L'Absinthe* is universally regarded as a pitiless, objective study of the despair and utter abasement befalling the absinthe drinker. As one of Degas' contemporaries wrote in 1887, "Absinthe and death together have killed more people in their funereal alliance than all the wars, pestilences and epidemics combined."

Absinthe, a hypnotic, mildly hallucinogenic drink, is the most notorious liqueur ever distilled. The drinker even forgets that he or she is alive. To be an absinthe drinker means to commit crimes of the most revolting character. It means brutality, cruelty, apathy, sensuality and mania—not just for the drinkers, but for their children as well. Absinthe, the one thing reckless, dissipated, jaded pleasure-seekers even today want to know, who do you have to know to get a drink around here?

There was a man who loved his absinthe. Ten years before he painted his painting, Edouard Manet, an early member of the impressionists, admonished him to stop painting "several Greek buffoons" and concentrate on rendering "just what the eye sees, simple and delectable scenes of modern decadence in the Sixties and Seventies. It helps to know that Impressionism, the first artistic movement ever realized entirely in cafés. These Impressionist cafés and absinthe were synonymous. Perceptions fringed by great quantities of absinthe and slowly transported into white into a series of points, dots, smudges, dashes and various figures but a dream.

The Impressionist cafés were situated mostly in Montmartre. There were several every day and night. Many and student cafés on the left bank, with a few made of coffins and gambling made of skulls and bones and bones. The cafés of the Boul' Miché, the Boul' des Capucines, the Boul' des Filles-du-Calvaire, the Boul' Miché were called the "Boul' des Filles" and the Boul' des Filles was the Boul' des Filles.

by Craig Pyes

to appear at the proper time in the proper café. By tradition, the time between four and six o'clock in the evening was designated the "hour of the apéritif," and the proper apéritif to drink was, of course, *une absinthe*.

The favorite vantage points on the Boul' Miché were along the sidewalks under the awnings. There the boulevardiers could sit and watch the flower girls, chorus girls and actresses, smell the roasting chestnuts, buy sweetmeats from the Turks, or pipes and canes from the peripatetic vendors or just gawk at the exotic Martinique Negroes strolling by. A waiter would appear, squeezing through the crowd (*Garçon! Garçon!*), place an empty tumbler on the table and within the tumbler a jigger containing an ounce of dark green absinthe, which at 136 proof was considered much too strong to drink unless diluted.

He then dripped water into the emerald elixir until it overflowed from one container to the other, changing from luminous green to a milky opalescence. The ceremony continued until the jigger held nothing but clear water, which meant that the contents in the tumbler would be five parts water to one part absinthe; the proper proportion to drink the proper apéritif at the proper time in the proper café. One could not imagine a civilized person nursing a whiskey or a cognac. Not! It had to be an absinthe. Only absinthe stimulated the mind, the passion and the libido—and all this only at the expense of reason!

Unlike the patrons of the Boul' Miché, the café bohemians would celebrate the hour of the apéritif for much of the day and far into the night. The Cabaret du Soleil D'or, *par exemple*, was a café whose innards housed nothing but dedicated absinthe drinkers. According to an eyewitness account from the 1890s, the members of this absinthe subculture were sloppily dressed, though they exhibited some adornment or finery completely out of character with the rest of their attire. Men had long hair, and so did women. The environment was gloomy and wretched, with smoke belching from foot-long pipes and cigarettes which were continuously roiled. The atmosphere reeked from the funereal alliance of tobacco and absinthe. The patrons listened to poetry and music and animated discussions of aesthetic theories.

One of the patrons of the 1890s cabaret scene was Paul Verlaine, the middle-aged poet of the slums, who had built a great literary reputation despite a reckless hunger for absinthe, which he had once dubbed "the Green Muse." Absinthe did to the mind's eyes of the writers of the period just what it had done to the impressionists' retinas. It was a sacrament of creativity, the key to a particularly luxurious madness, which opened the mind to poetic visions and sensual derangement.

Verlaine's lover, the 16-year-old poet

Arthur Rimbaud, wrote a manifesto on poetics calling for "*le dérèglement de tous les sens*." Rimbaud claimed that by deliberate intoxication the conscious mind would open to the ineffable; by drinking absinthe, the poet could achieve a fusion of all senses, a perfect synesthesia in which to dream.

Together they attended the best cafés, but Verlaine alone paid the bills. Rimbaud is described as taking absinthe "with ecstasy. He liked the taste; he enjoyed the effect; it gave him confidence." Rimbaud called it "The Academy of Absompe, that drunkenness for the virtue of this sage of glaciers." However, "the morning after," he once wrote, "was like sleeping in shit."

But if Rimbaud was sleeping in it, Verlaine, who was 26 at the time and married to 17-year-old Mathilde Maute de

**Absinthe, a hypnotic,
hallucinogenic drink,
is the most notorious
liqueur ever distilled.**

**It induces crimes
of the most revolting
character, brutality,
cruelty, apathy and mania.**

Fleurville, was buried in it. They say that absinthe seduces. Verlaine was seduced. As his affections for absinthe increased, so did his affections for Rimbaud. Likewise did his affections for Mathilde diminish. In the early morning hours Verlaine would slink home, stumble up the stairs and beat his wife. In one encounter, he tried to strangle Mathilde and then hurled their young baby against the wall, nearly killing it. *Un vrai absintheur, n'est ce pas?*

In the Café du Rat Mort, Rimbaud asked Verlaine to put his hands on the table, and when he had done so, Rimbaud sliced them with a knife. While it was only a lover's quarrel, Rimbaud's usual preference was to burn Verlaine with cigarettes or surprise him by jumping out at him in the night. During a trip to Brussels, Verlaine surprised Rimbaud by taking a drunken aim and shooting him in the wrist. Verlaine was sentenced to jail for two years, during which time his wife and child left him. Shortly thereafter, Rimbaud wrote: "What is my nothingness compared to the stupor which awaits you?" Absinthe did not make the heart grow fonder, only colder.

Another brilliant young poet, Alfred Jarry, consumed monumental quantities of absinthe because he "believed in it." Jarry held that absinthe should only be drunk straight, never diluted or muddled with water. Jarry died of chronic alcoholism at the age of 34. But George Saints-

bury, an English man of letters with a passion for the green liqueur, claimed "only a lunatic would drink it neat." The temperate Saintsbury lived to be 88. Toulouse-Lautrec carried a flask of absinthe in his cane. Van Gogh, another absinthophile, cut off his ear and mailed it to his girlfriend before he was completely consumed in his own madness. Absinthe was blamed. Openly called "bottled madness" and "the devil's liquor," its reputation deteriorated. The "Green Muse" became the "Green Curse."

Before absinthe was known as a subtle poison, it was called a vivifying miracle drug. Robert Jordan, the hero of Hemingway's *For Whom the Bell Tolls* and an absinthophile with a special craving for the Spanish Tarragona variety, justified his passion on medicinal grounds. Jordan described the "medicine" as an "opaque, bitter, tongue-numbing, brain-warming, stomach-warming, idea-changing liquid alchemy.... In this, the real absinthe, there is wormwood. It's supposed to rot your brain out, but I don't believe it. It only changes the ideas."

The ideas about wormwood change nearly every time someone studies it. The plant grows about two to four feet high and belongs to a species of sagebrush whose scientific name is *Artemisia absinthium*. Species of artemisia grow extensively in large parts of the world, including the United States, and the oils extracted from these plants have been used pharmacologically since recorded history. Its primary alchemy is absinthe, an essential oil from which the drink is made. But long before it was used for that, Hippocrates, the Greek founder of modern medicine, used to prescribe it for anemia, rheumatism and menstrual pains, a practice that was continued by European chemists into the twentieth century.

In this country, oil of wormwood was listed in the U.S. Formulary, "the druggist's Old Testament," as an antidote for fever and a stimulant for growing hair. It is still used today by W. F. Young, Inc., the world's largest buyer of wormwood, in manufacturing Absorbine Jr. and Absorbine Veterinary Liniment. "We use the oil," says the company's chemist, Rick Harper, "so Absorbine will smell good when you rub it on your stomach."

Dr. Pierre Ordinaire, a French royalist chemist living in exile in the mountains of Switzerland, hit upon the original formula for modern absinthe in 1792, when he discovered that wormwood oil was better when it rubbed the *inside* of the stomach. Using the dried flowering tops and leaves of artemisia and mixing them with 15 other aromatics, Dr. Ordinaire macerated them in alcohol, added water and distilled the mix in a 16- to 20-liter still. What came out tasted bitter on the first sip, but sweet at the last. Dr. Pierre dubbed it "the Green Fairy" and sold it at 136 proof to his neighbors in the Swiss countryside as a

remedy for gastric pains. Strong medicine, but apparently effective, for soon his neighbors were drinking it daily at the slightest twinge.

After Dr Ordinaire died in 1793, his housekeeper Mere Henriod continued to make the elixir until 1797 when she sold the formula to a Major Henri Dubied. Major Dubied discovered that absinthe cured just about everything, as well as stimulating the appetite and the genitals. "It was indeed one of the best and safest aphrodisiacs ever invented by the mind of man," wrote Maurice Zolotow in a 1971 *Playboy* article. "It worked by changing the ideas, as Hemingway said, and not by irritating the sexual glands, as do most aphrodisiacs."

Major Dubied's daughter married Henri-Louis Pernod, and the families established the first absinthe factory in Couvet, Switzerland, under the name of Pernod Fils. By 1827 the company had expanded its facilities and production began to soar helped by a colonial war in Algeria. The French Army in Africa was unable to obtain drinkable water, and military doctors advised troopers to add a few drops of absinthe to the water to rid it of microbes. This made a refreshing and agreeable beverage. The ratio of absinthe to water increased daily, and Pernod Fils profited immensely. Daily production rose from 400 liters in 1829 to over 30,000 liters at the turn of the century, with world-wide distribution.

Then, in 1901, disaster struck, signaling an omen which marked the beginning of the end of the absinthe era. One Sunday, a lightning bolt hit a telephone line at the large Pernod plant at Pontalier and was conducted like a long-distance call along the copper wire to a metal vat, cutting it in two and spilling its flaming contents all over the premises. Fearing that the other vats would explode and destroy the entire neighborhood, a worker ran into the cellars and opened all the faucets, sending absinthe streaming into the Doubs River. Absinthe, which had kept the French alive when added to the waters of Algeria, was now polluting the very currents of France.

While Pontalier burned, French doctors raged against habitual "absinthism," which they claimed to be medically distinct from alcoholism. In its acute stages the absinthism victim can hardly walk and suffers from vertigo and giddiness, disorientation and stupefaction. From the moral standpoint, there is great instability of character and a tendency toward violent crime. In its chronic stages, absinthism causes convulsive epilepsy and hallucinatory delirium, followed by amnesia. One's conscience disappears entirely, giving way to an automatism in which criminal acts are performed. You can easily spot someone in this condition—they are exceedingly pale, ashamed, gloomy, exhibiting the disposition of somebody just about to jump. Unfortunately medical texts further assure us that

this condition does not end with those afflicted, but is transmitted genetically to their children, enfeebling them and perpetuating the tendencies toward crime.

Physicians and reformers naturally became alarmed. France was degenerating right before their bloodshot eyes. After France lost the Franco Prussian War the number of insane French doubled in 30 years. Juvenile delinquency and violent crime soared. Paris was plagued by gaiety (yes!) and wretchedly low standards of moral responsibility. Talk in the cafes was no longer of avenging the national disgrace, of honor, of taking back Alsace-Lorraine, storming Berlin and kicking the asses of *les boches*, but of obscenities, vice, vulgarities, le can-can, drug drinking and *l'amour*. Which brings us to the worst and most alarming symptom of absinthism: it made people avoid the army!

**"What people
object to in
absinthe is mostly
the name 'wormwood.'
It makes them
think little maggots
are eating
out their brains."**

Another case of colonial karma was in the making, the army, having introduced absinthe to France, was now being destroyed by it, much the same way in which the American expeditionary forces in Vietnam were immobilized by the marijuana they encountered there. As one writer of the time expressed it, "The absinthe drinker is content to crouch before the starwart, honest, beerbred Teuton." France had to choose between a national *apéritif* and a national army.

But first, things got worse. On August 28, 1905, 31-year-old Jean Lanfray, a French-born vineyard worker living in the little community of Cormugny, in the commune of the Vaud, Switzerland awoke and poured himself a shot of absinthe, which he diluted in three parts water. He got dressed and had another absinthe in water, then went about his daily chores.

On returning home that evening Lanfray commenced an argument with his pregnant wife over why she had not polished his boots that day. Then, going to what appears to be extraordinary lengths to make his point, Lanfray took his Vetterli rifle out of the closet and shot his wife through the head. Hearing the noise, his four-year-old daughter Rose ran into the room screaming, and Lanfray silenced her with a bullet in the chest. His youngest daughter Blanche, who remained sleeping in the crib, received the next bullet and

died instantly. With his family now liquidated, Lanfray turned the rifle on himself, tying a string to the trigger and aiming at his brain. Lanfray jerked the string, but succeeded only in shooting himself in the jaw. Easily discouraged, he threw the rifle down, picked up the corpse of his youngest daughter and went to sleep, it off out in the barn.

That is where the police found him. Lanfray was taken into custody and driven to the hospital in nearby Nyon, where his wound was fixed. Then he was taken to see his family in their coffins. According to Marie Blaser, the nurse on duty that night, Lanfray cried at the sight of them.

"It is not me who did this! Tell me I have not done this! I loved my wife and children so much! Like the fictional Gaston Bauvais, he didn't remember a thing."

To the shocked citizens of the Vaud, the motiveless massacre was at first perplexing. Jean Lanfray's drinking buddies at the cabaret all described him as an *un bon garçon*. And indeed, he was. In detention while awaiting sentencing, he was always perfectly "calm, submissive and discreet" and he took to embroidering little silken ornaments with marvelous dexterity. It was not until Lanfray was remanded for observation to the psychiatric institution at Cery that the leading Swiss psychologist of the time, Dr. Albert Mahaim, opined that it had been the prisoner's daily intake of absinthe over a long period of time which had triggered his murderous rage. In fact, Dr. Mahaim reported, "It was a classic case."

The story of the "absinthe murderer" made front-page headlines all over Europe. Suddenly, absinthe was behind every unsolved crime west of Poland. On February 23, 1906, Lanfray went to trial charged with four murders, the last being the four-month-old fetus of his pregnant wife. His lawyers argued that he had been temporarily deranged due to absinthe, as Dr. Mahaim had found. The prosecutor disagreed.

Lanfray, the prosecutor argued, had taken two ounces of absinthe only ten hours before the commission of the crime. In addition, he had consumed a *crème de menthe*, a cognac and soda, six or seven glasses of a strong, local Burgundian *chambertin* and a cup of black coffee laced with brandy. Nor was this unusual. The prosecutor explained that Lanfray's habitual daily intake of liquor included six quarts of wine, plus six to eight ounces of brandy and cordials, of which absinthe was a minor part. Serious studies made of absinthe drinkers at the time showed that they were usually quite catholic in their alcoholic tastes. One medical researcher even wrote a scientific paper lamenting the fact that he could not find a pure absinthe-consuming population among the French working class, and he wondered how other scientists dared to come to any conclusions on the absinthe question. But never mind. Lanfray was found

guilty and sentenced to 30 years imprisonment. Three days later he hung himself in his cell.

But absinthe was what was really on trial in the Vaud.

By the turn of the century, temperance movements had gained full swing. As the world moved into the modern era, older social orders crumbled and alcohol consumption grew. So did the aspirations of emerging nation-states and empires. Governments now relied on the masses rather than professional armies to fight their wars. The masses were too tipsy, and the cereal crops were needed for the army, not brandy. The Lanfray trial helped turn the tide. Though many countries instituted general temperance, absinthe became the first and only beverage ever to be singled out for complete prohibition. It was banned by Belgium in 1906, Switzerland in 1908, Holland in 1910 and the United States in 1912. France, which consumed two-thirds of the world's absinthe, still had that choice to make.

Then, the deputy from the Vosges, Pierre Henri Schmidt, came forward.

"We're not attacking the hour of the apéritif, this agreeable moment of détente," he declared tremulously to the Chamber of Deputies. "We are attacking the erosion of the national defense. The abolition of absinthe and the national defense are the same. What is necessary is trench warfare against absinthism!"

The trench warfare lasted nine years. Each year, absinthe was acquitted by medical committees. But Schmidt worked tirelessly. He argued figures, showing how absinthe consumption was spreading through France like a plague. (Official statistics from the French Ministry of Finance showed that absinthe consumption increased until 1900, then dropped considerably by the time of the debates.)

But then war broke out, and on March 16, 1915, Schmidt finally left his parliamentary trench victorious. The legislature agreed, absinthe would be banished forever from France, and public health would benefit the national defense.

One million, three-hundred-fifty-three thousand, eight hundred young Frenchmen were spared a life of hallucinations to die without dreams in the trenches of Europe.

On July 13, 1907, Harper's Weekly noted: "The growing consumption in America of absinthe the green curse of France" has attracted the attention of the Department of Agriculture, and an investigation has been ordered to determine to what extent it is being manufactured in this country." Five years later, on July 25, 1912, the Department of Agriculture issued Food Inspection Decision 147, which banned absinthe in America. The ruling is now covered under Section 801A of the Federal Food, Drug and Cosmetic Act, as amended in August 1972. Also in that act Section 409 Unsafe Food Additives is specifically applied to absinthe because of thujone, the active ingredient of wormwood oil.

Thujone ($C_{10}H_{16}O$) is a colorless, aromatic and bitter resinous material. It is mildly convulsant and is the "cause" of absinthism. While no scientific material exists proving a correlation between thujone and homicide, experiments have shown the chemical to be mildly toxic. Enforcement of the absinthe ban is under the jurisdiction of the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms. This writer was surprised when, at the end of a phone interview, an employee of that department let drop: "One of our chemists here, however, is skeptical that there are any damaging properties to thujone, at least in the quantity in which it is contained in absinthe."

Had absinthe been framed?

Dr. Richard Rappolt, the executive editor of Clinical Toxicology, volunteered the same opinion: "Our feeling has been, as far as medical toxicology is concerned, that the most harmful ingredient in absinthe is not wormwood or thujone, but ethanol, which is drinking alcohol. What people object to in absinthe is mostly the name 'wormwood.' It makes them think

little maggots are eating their brains.

"But there is really very little known about absinthe," Dr. Rappolt continued. "So they've removed the wormwood and now market it as an anisette apéritif. Well, if you drink enough of it, anisette flushes potassium out of the body. And what about the glycyrrhiza in licorice? I swear there are cases of people eating up to 10 to 20 Switzers a day whose muscles won't coordinate because they've become ataxic and weak. The point is, everything is toxic if you take enough of it!"

The way the FDA operates is that in order for food additives to be admitted to the dietary, they must be on the GRAS list (Generally Regarded As Safe). A substance is placed on GRAS only after laboratory studies on its lifetime effects on two kinds of animals have established a permissible "no effect" level, or the quantity at which the substance can be ingested without injury to brain, liver or fetus. But animals aren't humans, so as a safety measure the human no effect level has to be 100 times smaller than it is for animals.

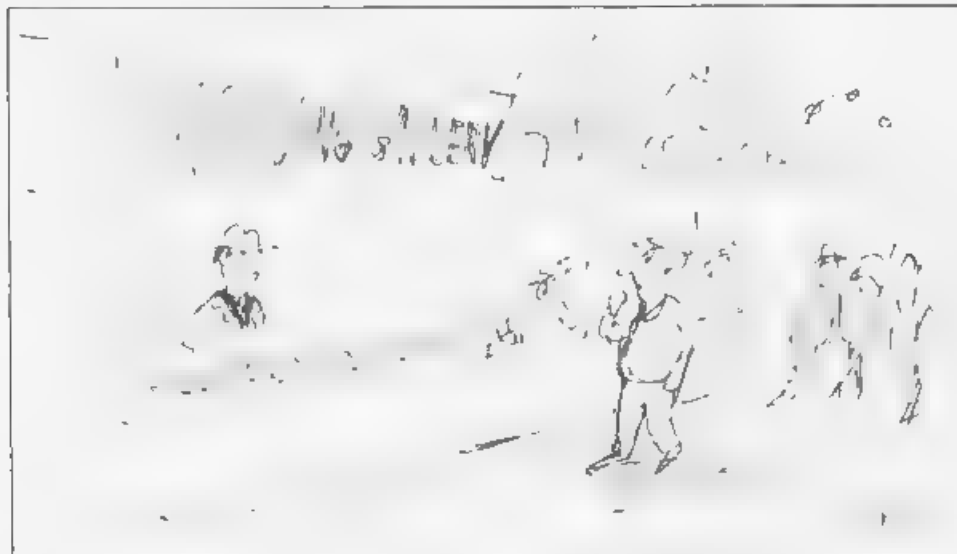
The generally accepted measure for thujone poisoning is in ratio of 30 milligrams per kilogram of a rat's body weight. At this level, thujone causes mild convulsions and lesions of the cerebral cortex in the rat's brain. The maximum nonlethal dose (administered orally) is 75 milligrams per kilogram. This is not very toxic. And though thujone is psychoactive in a relatively weak dose compared to other flavorings, evidence indicates that it does not cause cumulative damage to the nervous system.

The question is: How much thujone is contained in absinthe?

We were unable to find any records of modern experimentation on this question, and three departments of government, as well as the Pernod Corporation, claimed that they had none. Nevertheless, we were able to reconstruct an equation which did give us an average approximate amount, and we checked this equation with three separate toxicologists. What it shows is that the intake of thujone in one ounce of traditional absinthe (drunk by a 150-pound person) is 50 times less than the dosage required to cause a minimum toxic reaction. This safety margin of 50, we should point out, is half of what is necessary to qualify by FDA standards. But the toxicity is so minimal that it is doubtful that anyone could drink enough absinthe to suffer anything other than alcoholic poisoning.

An ounce of absinthe contains much less thujone than is contained in the amount of wormwood oil once prescribed by doctors for alleviation of fever. What this means, very simply, is that the thujone in the notorious Green Curse must be innocent of 99 percent of the crimes attributed to it. Jean Lanfray, on the day of the murder had consumed 30 times less

(continued on page 73)



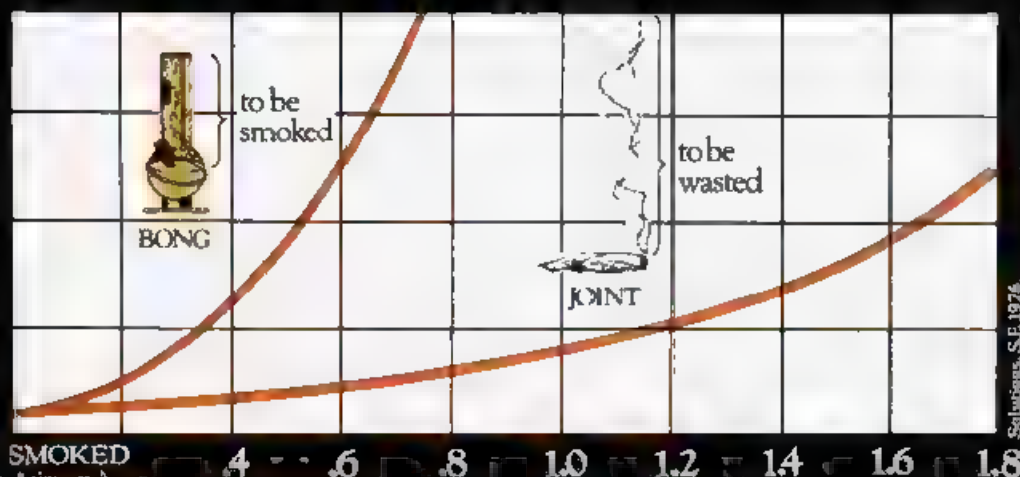
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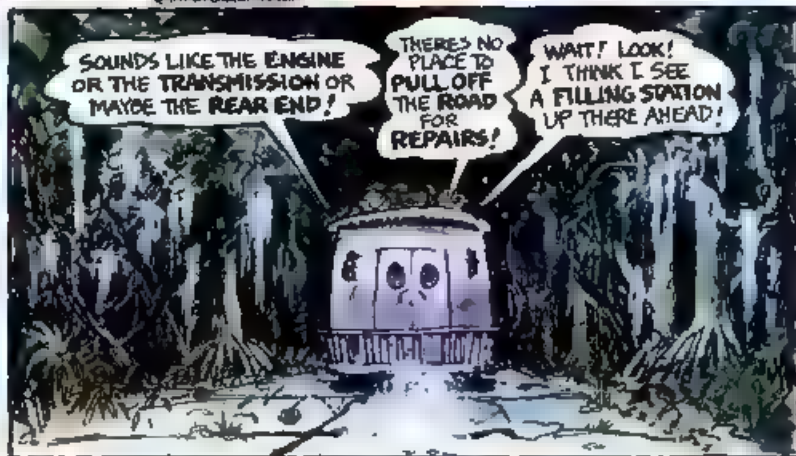
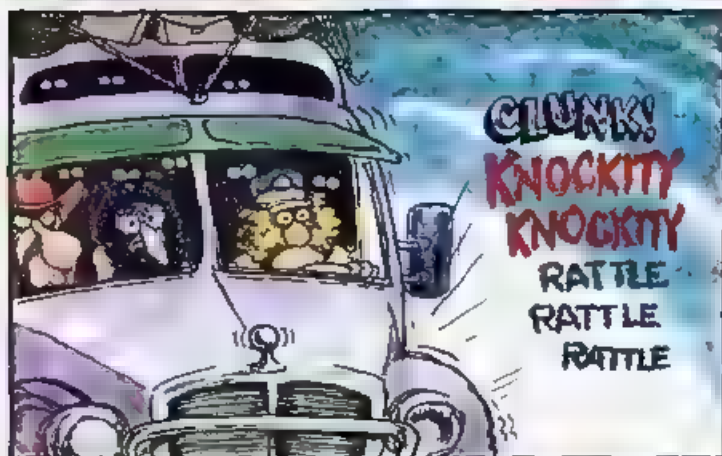
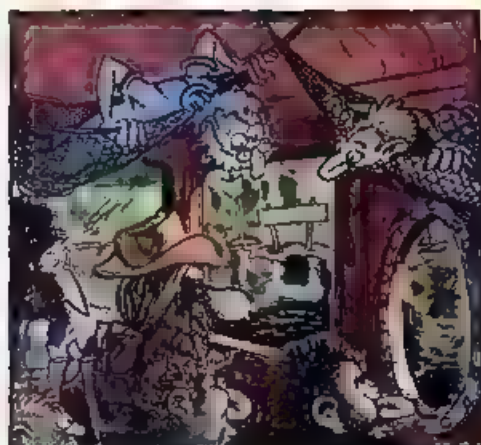
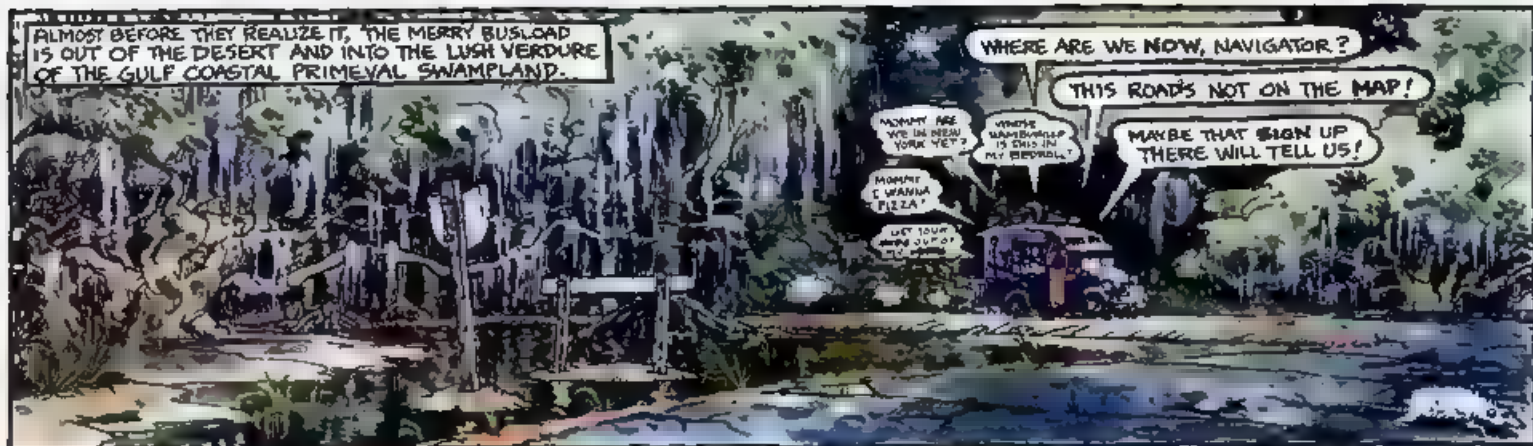
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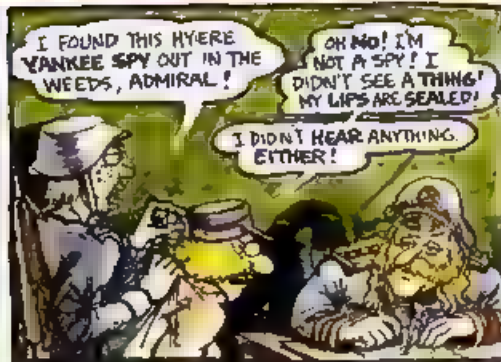
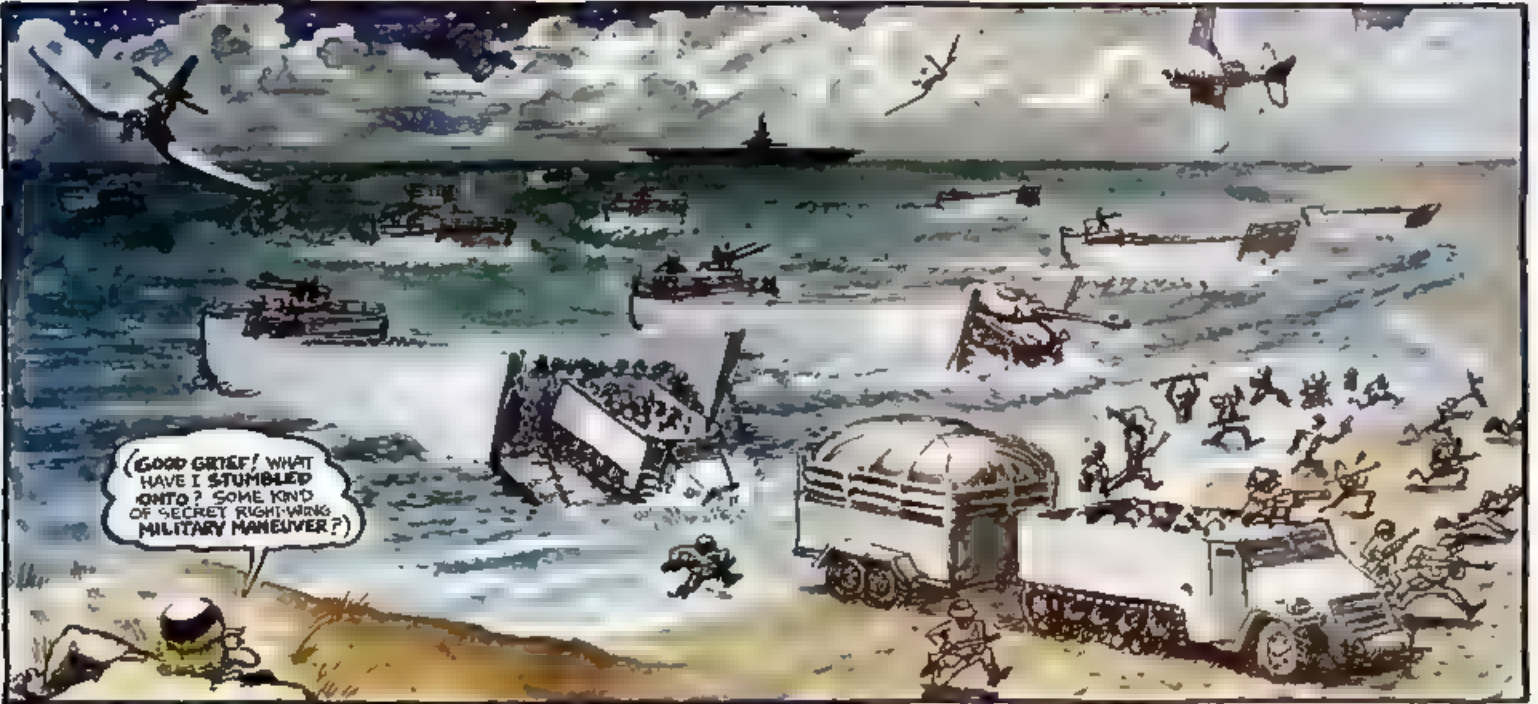
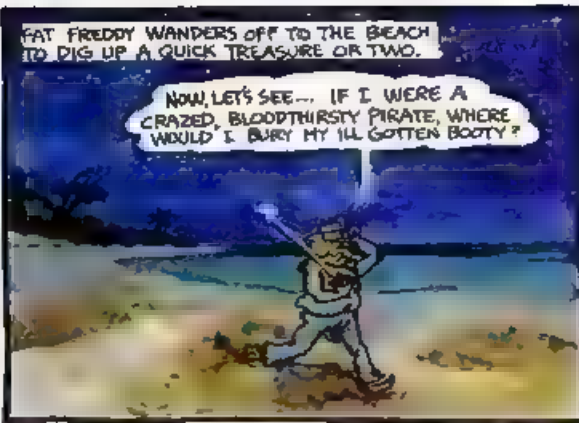
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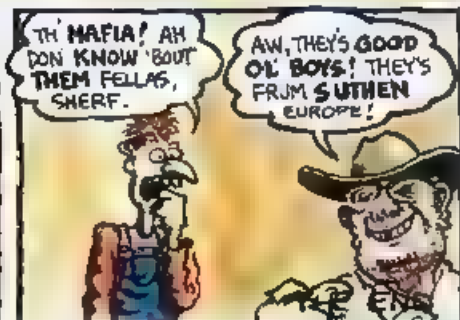
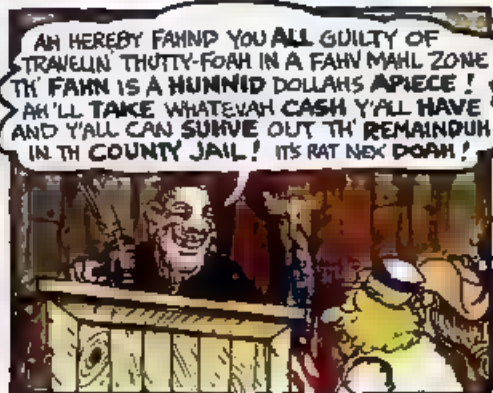
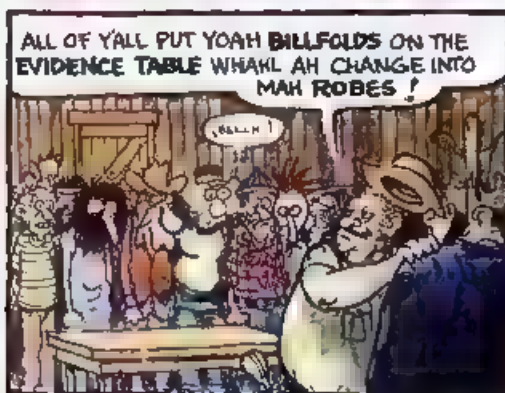
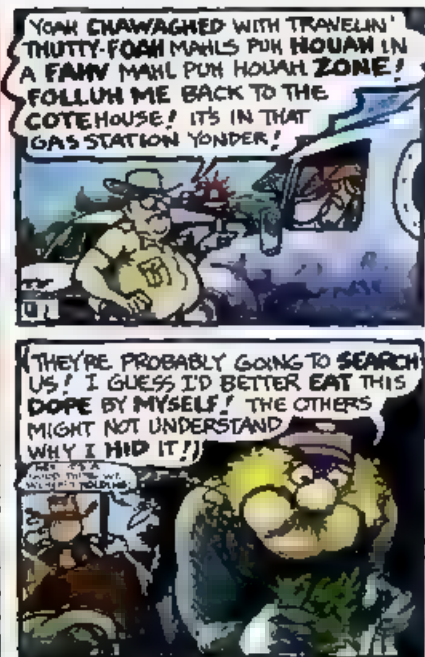
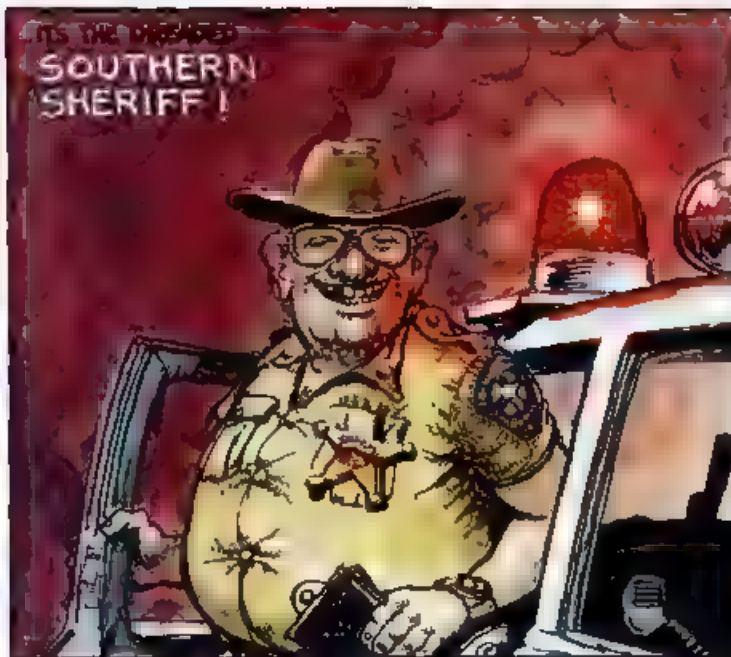
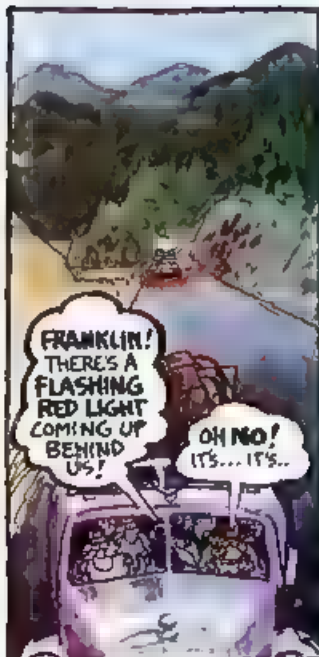
Once upon a time, we were so poor that our mother told us to take the old cow and sell it. On our way to market we met a man who offered to take the cow in exchange for some magic beans. We took the beans home, and in the morning the garden was full of pot plants, some of them millions of miles high. Then we woke up. It was all a dream. Too much of that 200-percent Colombian coffee, probably. In the future we'll stick to Mexican Poco Verde ("little green"). It's soft, cuddly, furry, greenish brown dope with rocket-fuel THC content, and no matter how many angles you photograph it from, you never get tired of looking at it. We hope. □











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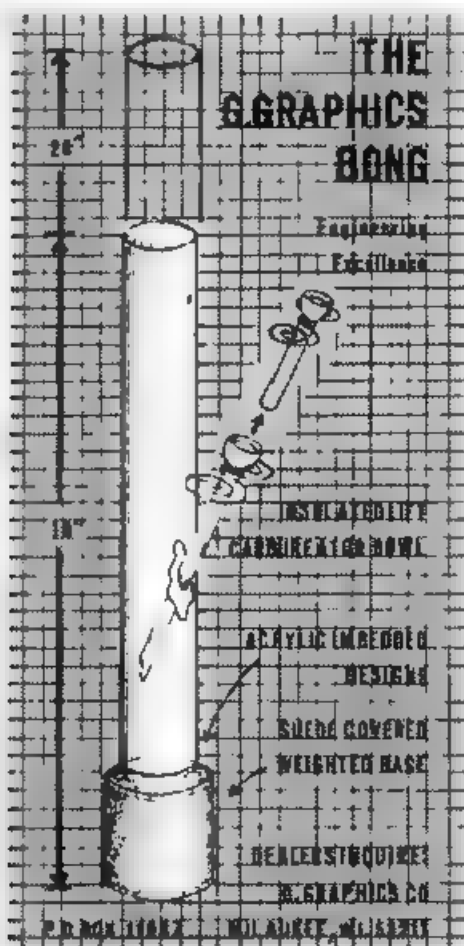
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Absinthe

(continued from page 66)

thru one than it would take to make a rat
shudder

Thujone is still present today in vermouth (from the German Wermut, which also means "wormwood"), but in legally passable quantities of 10 parts per million (there are about 60 parts per million in absinthe). Thujone is also present in sausages spiced with sage.

Such scientific research remains to be done on the absinthe question, but there are a number of ways you could gain direct experiential knowledge of the problem. A Danish import firm sells a bottle of vodka, the label of which advises the purchaser to soak wormwood leaves in the alcohol for two days to draw out the thujonic essences. Wormwood is available at most herbalists for a few dollars a pound. This same process could be done with any of the so-called imitation absinthe drinks on the market such as Pernod, Ricard, Ouzo, Ojen, Anesone, Herbsaint and our personal favorite, Liqueur D'Amis (by Charles Jacquin in Philadelphia; it is bottled at 136 proof, the same as absinthe), for a more quintessential absinthe experience. Macerate the flowering tops and leaves of wormwood in the drink for about two weeks, agitating and filtering it each day. And *voilà!*

But before you touch a drop, you better pay attention to a recent study on the effects of thujone conducted by the Institut de Recherches Appliquées aux Boissons in Paris. As with the FDA, we have drawn our own animal-to-human inferences, which may be of serious import for the neophyte absintheur wishing to start the regreening of America.

The experiment was conducted on Swiss male mice. These mice were given exceedingly high doses of thujone (150 milligrams per kilogram, nearly the maximum nonlethal intramuscular dose), and were then observed in various "typical" situations.

The mice in the first group were made to hang from a bar by their little toes and, under the influence of the thujone, were unable to right themselves. The thujone-stoned rodents of the second group had their heads stuffed into a test tube and were unable to extricate themselves. The third group of mice was noted to eventually fall when placed on a spinning dowel.

The mice in the final group seemed so hypnotized by the thujone that, when placed on their backs, they didn't attempt to resume a normal standing position. But then, if you had to look forward to hanging from your toes from a high bar, getting your head stuffed into a test tube or being placed on a spinning dowel, what would you do?

Answer: join the French Army and work for the national defense.



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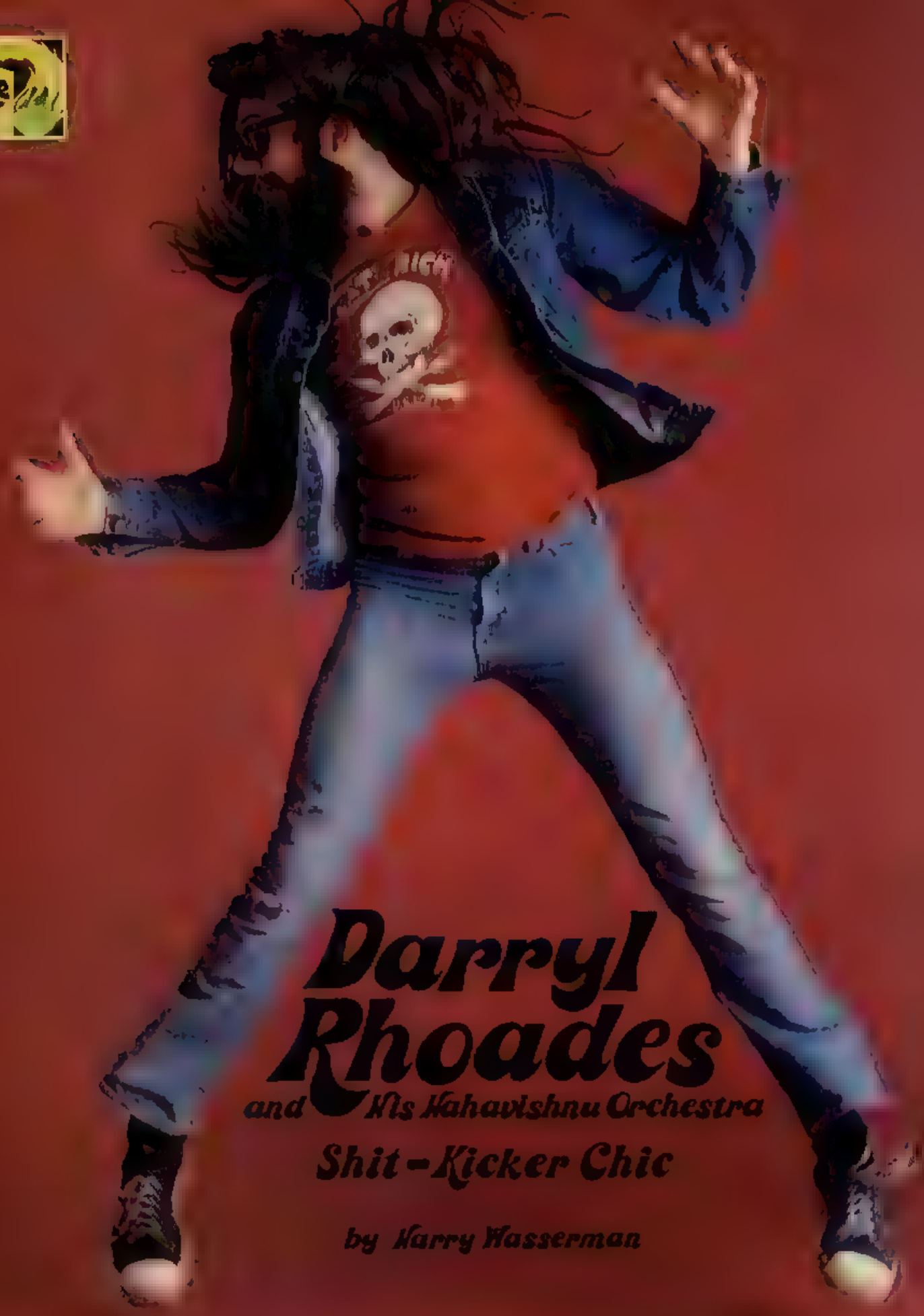
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***Darryl
Rhoades***
and His Mahavishnu Orchestra
Shit-Kicker Chic

by Harry Wasserman



The ears of Atlanta are burning with the sound of Darryl Rhoades and the Hahavishnu Orchestra, the hot new 12-piece rock band whose southern-fired satire is crisp and delicious. Darryl's topical humor has been compared to that of Lenny Bruce, the Fugs, the Mothers and the Tubes, but he's more like Carter's dixie Doppelgänger Jimmy Carter is a mini-julep Jekyll to Darryl Rhoades's hominy-grits Hyde.

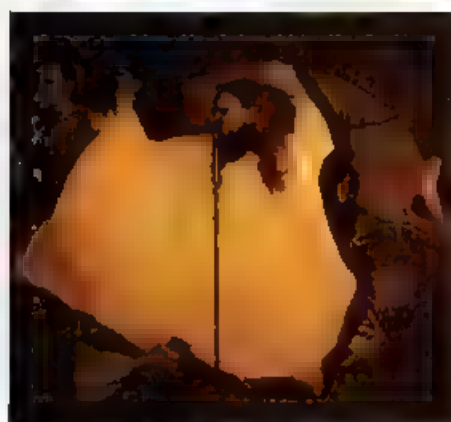
But southern rock bands are a dime a dozen. Any plowboy can trade his tractor for a guitar and start singing about outlaws, desperadoes, weed whites and wine. "All southern bands are the same, agrees Darryl. "Two guitars, two drummers, 'I got drunk last night, blah, blah, blah, blah.'"

What makes Hahavishnu any different? Besides the fact they've got three guitarists, two drummers, two dancers, piano, sax, xylophone and ukelele? "Nobody's doing what we're doing," replies Darryl. "Everyone else is a Broadway musical, but we're making a statement. Some people will go home and think about what we've done, some will just get drunk and go to sleep. And of course some people get pissed, but that's the breaks."

Macon's leading bacon, Gregg Allman, is sizzled in "Tied to a Harley-Davidson," in which Darryl as a slurring burned-out Gregg is haunted by visions of a giant coke spoon, his former road manager Scooter Herring, Cher ("Don't take drugs, Gregg, you don't need them! We can sing together!") and the ghostly voice of dear departed Duane ("Gregg! This is your brother, Duane! Take the drugs!").

Another big southern band, the Ku Klux Klan, is ridiculed when Darryl dons flowing white robes to sing "Yipes! Here Come the Negroes!" and "Shaft on Welfare" while dancers Genia Grant and Dana Grantham cavort in blackface. Southern macho fantasies are skewered in "American Love" when Darryl sings, "I love you baby, but if I see you with him, I'll smash yo' face with a brick."

But Darryl's brazen wit transcends all boundaries, and his themes are universal sex ("You're So Impotent," "Remember Me [When You're Under Him]," "Neuter is Neither" and "God I'm Lonely and My Playboy Pages Stick Together"); drugs



("Leader of the Smack" and "I Was a Teenage Quaalude") and violence ("Fresh Meat," "The Morgue," "Euthanasia" and the immortal lyrics, "I left my legs in South Cambodia").

Helen Reddy's exploitation of the women's movement is attacked when singer Jimmy Royals does a drag lampoon of "I Am Woman." "I am insane. I am an imbecile. I'm commercial!" Young lust is the subject of "Burgers from Heaven," in which Darryl croons to his dead teen angel, "The grease on the fries reminds me of your hair," while dancers Genia and Dana, in ponytails and carhop outfits, wiggle their malts and shake their plates.

"The sexiest part is when I pull a burger from my blouse," confides Genia. But she's quick to add, "Sexy to some people, that is. Personally, I don't get off on hamburgers."

Undoubtedly half the attraction of Hahavishnu is its visual pyrotechnics, like when Darryl sets fire to his kazoo in a send-up of Jimi Hendrix's "Purple Haze." "You're almost too visual," said one record company the band approached. But Darryl's first claim to fame was on the basis of Atlantans first hearing one of his songs on the radio. He had given a basement tape of some of his early numbers (including "Breast Mumps," "Pup tents and Cupcakes" and the ever-popular "Head Jobs, Hand Jobs and Hand Grenades") to progressive AM disc jockey Ross Brittain, who went wild and played his fave, "Leprosy Queen," on his WJLN morning show. The rest is history. "When the song was played the first



time on the radio," Brittain recalls, "the switchboard lit up. People called in and said it was the grossest, most perverted thing they'd ever heard, and that their mothers thought it was disgusting—but they asked me to play it again. An elderly guy called and said it was no laughing matter—if you had leprosy and laughed your jaw would fall off. I realized then a star had been born."

Darryl actually had been born years earlier, but he avoided childhood because he couldn't stand children. "Kids? They've got no real use," says Darryl. "The only thing they're good for is putting under the rear wheels of cars when you're changing tires so the car won't roll down a hill." As an infant he channeled his aggression into drumming—on the sides of his cereal bowl, on garbage-can lids and finally, on a large red drum his parents gave him for his fifth birthday. When the police came with a summons for disturbing the peace, Darryl knew he had found an appreciative audience.

After stints at various reform schools and colleges, Darryl received an even higher education by turning on to dope and becoming drummer for a hippie rock band called the Celestial Voluptuous Banana. He says he played with "just about every band in Atlanta" before going on the Holiday Inn circuit with various dinner combos. The lounge-lizards of middle America tolerated these bands' hackneyed repertoires of such old stand-bys as "We've Only Just Begun" and "Joy to the World," but eventually Darryl threw up his hands in disgust and threw up his lunch in his hotel room. In January 1975 he started the Hahavishnu Orchestra and for the past two years it has toured Atlanta, New Orleans, Houston, Austin, Dallas, Tulsa, Nashville and lately, Washington, D.C. and New York's Other End café.

Today Darryl Rhoades is 26. With his beard, long hair and dark glasses he looks like one of the Smith Brothers who switched from cough drops to chug-a-lugging Romilar. But no more drugs for Darryl, and no booze. "He calls himself a vegetarian," says Genia, "which means all he eats is popcorn and pizza. And he's a hyper sugar-freak who gets very little sleep." Darryl claims his major musical influence to be "the 7-11 magic market." □

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This Is Your Life

(continued from page 62)

cover sources for Information Digest. Under the pseudonyms of John Seeley and Sheila O'Connor, they opened a leftist bookstore called the Red House in Washington, D.C., in 1971. They also founded an organization called Coordinating Center for Education in Repression and the Law, which was supposed to combat police repression and work to promote prisoner rights and abolish capital punishment. Sheila Rees also obtained a part-time job with the National Lawyers Guild, a civil rights organization. All the while, the couple was turning out Information Digest and sending it to the restricted red squad mailing list.

It's not clear whether any police departments or other law enforcement agencies were actively involved with the Reeses in the Information Digest project, but the Baltimore post office box used by the newsletter was opened by the Maryland State Police. Rees reportedly has worked with several police departments across the country, as well as with the Wackenhut Corporation. Sheila Louise Rees is employed in the office of ultraright Georgia congressman Lawrence P. McDonald, a member of the John Birch Society's National Council. McDonald's accusations against prominent people regularly appear in the Congressional Record, where the congressman has immunity from libel suits. Information Digest is then free to repeat the charges without risk of litigation. The newsletter's targets have included such figures from the entertainment world as Eddie Albert, Candice Bergen, Leonard Bernstein, Dick Cavett, Dustin Hoffman, Shirley MacLaine, Carl Reiner and Richard Widmark. Rev. Ralph David Abernathy, Ramsey Clark, John Lindsay and Leonard Woodcock have also been smeared by Information Digest.

It is not known whether the Reeses and Information Digest have retained any formal ties to the Church League of America, but it seems reasonable to assume that dossiers are freely swapped among the League, the Digest, the American Security Council and all other similar "subversive" watchers. These groups are not, in essence, competitive with one another; they share a common objective: to blacklist and otherwise defame those people of whose philosophy they disapprove.

In his handbook, *Where's What*, investigator Murphy makes no reference to these groups; in a preface he states that he has deliberately omitted all reference to investigating subversive activities because "the inclusion of sources of information on subversive activities would have necessitated a higher security classification, and the book would not receive the distribution the author hopes it de-

serves." (The handbook was classified "confidential," the lowest security classification in general use in the government.) But we know that there is considerable contact between the blacklisting services and federal, state and local law enforcement and intelligence agencies.

The Church League's brochure includes, "government security personnel" among the kinds of people who regularly visit its research library. The American Security Council and Western Research were founded by ex-FBI agents who are disposed to cooperate with their old alma mater. And Information Digest seems to exist primarily to disseminate dossier data to official police agencies. It seems a very safe bet that all the private sector blacklisting services are willing sources of information for any official investigator.

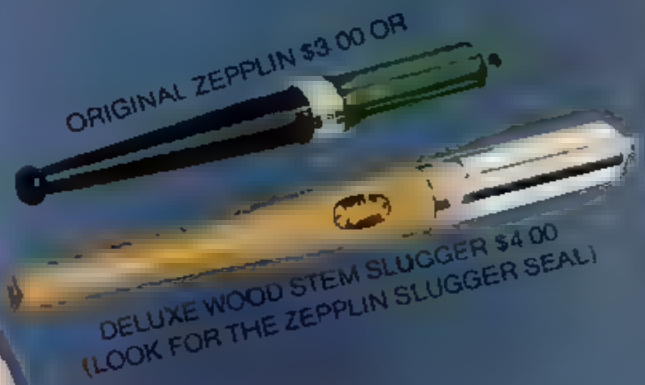
Even the author of *Where's What* probably has not fully charted the labyrinth of the American dossier establishment. Are there hidden passageways linking the credit bureaus, the corporate security departments, the private detective agencies and the blacklisting services with government intelligence agencies, police red squads and organizations like the Law Enforcement Intelligence Unit? Undoubtedly the answer is yes, but who, even among the "authorized persons" of the file exchanges, can say they know every such interface?

The private sector's dossier establishment has taken on a life and momentum of its own. With the single exception of credit bureaus, the private file builders are completely unregulated. Privacy and freedom of information laws give the citizen the right to examine whatever files the government keeps on him or her, and to have erroneous information corrected. The laws strictly limit the circumstances in which such information can be released or even exchanged among government agencies. But the private sector file-keepers are free to collect every sort of gossip, misinformation or outright lie about you and to traffic in the most intimate details of your private life, and there is virtually no legal rein on their actions. You have no legal right to demand to see the files they're keeping on you or to insist they correct the falsehoods contained therein.

The Federal Privacy Act of 1974 set up the Privacy Protection Study Commission to investigate the problem of private sector file-keeping. The commission's recommendations will probably produce some new laws restraining some of the more outrageous abuses of the dossier establishment. But no one expects legislation to correct all the problems; much of the activity of the file fanciers is, after all, protected by the right of free speech and other constitutional guarantees. The power of the private sector's gossip mongers will only be broken when they are recognized for what they are and society refuses to buy their trash. ■

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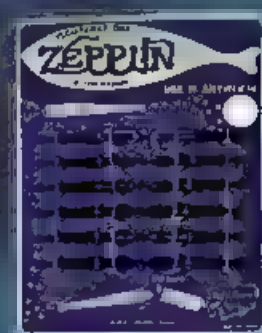
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Opium Express

(continued from page 54)

"Five... six... seven," counted Beerstein. "All here, I think. No one thrown out. An uneven flight, I daresay. I've seen worse."

We were all standing shivering under the thatched roof of the hut, which must have gotten a little out of repair since the U.S. withdrawal, since it was leaking ferociously. Captain Andy and Nubsy Grogan were passing a pint of grog back and forth, while Groupiesinskaya was sheltering herself in Mitchell Cohen's arms. Herr von Leinsdorf and Tri Vo Lunn had resumed all their glacial diplomatic mien, but I thought I saw a twinkle in Wessels' monocle and a pair of eyelashes batting behind Tri's goggle-like spectacles. Soon, I thought, every Vietnamese worker-citizen would have a full set of eyelashes to bat at the sexual partner of his choice. But there was still one debt to be paid.

"The time has come to pay all debts, Mr. Cohen," Beerstein stated loathesomely. "I will now accept your saddlebags and consider myself handsomely rewarded for my services to the Dudehood."

"Well now, hold on a second, Beerstein," drawled the weary smuggler of the sage. "These here saddlebags was a gift to me from a mighty powerful brujo, and I'd sure hate to part with them."

"Come sir, this is no time for games," snapped Beerstein. He clapped his hands. Instantly a triple ring of knife-wielding, grinning Vietnamese encircled us. "The saddlebags, Mr. Cohen. Do not compel me to insist."

"Well, now, Chief, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. Call off these cutthroats and I'll put a very important canister right in your hands."

"You try my patience, Mr. Cohen—an unhealthy practice," Beerstein commented acidly. "Very well." Turning to the stokers, he told them to hurry up with their unloading. All they did was caress their knives.

"You see, Mr. Cohen, my men are as eager as I am to see that you receive your correct change. Now give me those saddlebags."

"All right, Mr. Beerstein." Slowly, Cohen handed him the saddlebags. Beerstein's eyes glittered as they undid the fasteners. In a moment, we could all see the compartments full of glittering white flakes. Mesmerized by the shining crystals, Beerstein held them out for all to see. The rain leaking through the makeshift roof commingled with the powder.

"Excellent, Mr. Cohen—you have outdone yourself. I always admired the Dudehood's ways. And now—the taste."

Clutching the damp saddlebags to himself, Beerstein took out a jeweled cokespoon with two prongs, the kind used by the most opulent of pimps and record

"Superb."
"Tough, tan and silky."

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promoters Drawing out two evenly matched piles of moist, glistening whiteness, he admired the twin totes for a moment before thrusting them high into his nostrils and inhaling mightily

Suddenly he coughed, wheezed and tottered to his knees. "You—you—tricked me! You—you—" he sputtered helplessly. His nose was fatally clogged with quick-drying plaster of Paris

"You tricked yourself, Beerstein. Next time you transship a groupie, make sure she's not a plaster caster too. Groupie-sinskaya here happens to have more cocks in her henhouse than Frank Perdue."

She looked around proudly "Anybody got any gum?"

The earth shook as Beerstein's asphyxiated form crashed to the ground. Captain Andy and Grogan were in his pockets quicker than clergymen. "Stiff as a belayin' pin," said the Captain "Dead as a doughnut."

The crowd of Vietnamese killers began to melt away into the night. Cohen quickly sized up the situation.

"Herr von Leinsdorpf, there's enough fuel in this bird to carry you and comrade Tri to Hanoi in five hours. I suggest that any of the rest of you who feel a might hot under the collar when the police get too close, join them. The rains will soon take care of Mr Beerstein."

"Danke schön, Herr Cohen. Between your people and the revolutionary workers of Germany there will be an everlasting bund—I mean bond."

"Comrade Cohen, my war-torn country is as grateful to you as the heated female elephant is for the, eh—"

"All hands on deck!" shouted Cap'n Andy from the cockpit.

"Hoo hullo," echoed Nubsy from his perch in the hold.

"What about me, darling?"

"You too, darling. You've got to get on that plane and wait for me in Hanoi. I'll be there soon. But first I've got to make sure this formula reaches San Francisco. Being a dope smuggler isn't glamorous, but it's a job and somebody's got to do it. There's kids back in America counting on me."

There were tears mixed with rain on her face as she climbed back aboard the Opium Express.

"G'bye!"

"Auf wiedersehen!"

"Bon appetit!"

"Don't forget to write!"

"Look out for the vice squad!"

"Look out for the narcs!"

"Lookit me, I'm a free pilot," said Captain Andy. "After all these years, no more opium smuggling. Well, bite my barometer!"

As we watched the big bird fly off toward Hanoi, Cohen put his arm around my shoulders. "You know," he said, "this could be the beginning of a beautiful friendship.... Have you got 100 bucks until we get to San Francisco?"

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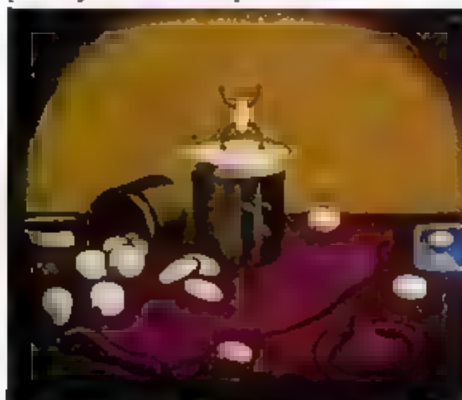
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lowing one each day, the birth control pill
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traceptive. New forms appear constantly
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smokers. Latest in the synthetic sweep-
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rarer than with the one-a-day tablet. The
implant seems to decrease sexual drive in
males, but researcher Gopi Gupta of Chi-
cago's Population Council claims a few
testosterone shots will safely fix that.

Pot Probes Expose Shrunk Head Jive

"Research" showing brain atrophy among
pot smokers has been officially debunked
by reports in the Journal of the American
Medical Association. A 1970 British study
that called hemp a real head shrinker
made plenty of headlines at the time,
though it was widely criticized as un-
scientific. Only ten persons were tested;
all used many drugs besides pot, and
many had a previous history of brain
damage or head injury.

Finally, two groups of doctors, one at
Washington University in St. Louis and
one at Harvard Medical School, improved
on the first experiment. One group tested
subjects who had toked at least five joints

a day for five years. The other had volun-
teers puff five or more registered reefers
in the lab for three weeks. In neither
sample was there any evidence of any
structural changes in the brain or nervous
system.

The Shot Hurt Round the World

One necessity for well-being seems to be a
healthy suspicion of government mass
immunization programs. Two score dead
and 100 paralyzed are reminders of the
swine flu lesson — except in specific emer-
gencies like rabies, it's unwise to burden



the body with toxins against future dis-
eases that may not even exist. If you know
someone who was hurt by that fiasco, the
address to sue is U.S. Public Health Ser-
vice Claims Office, 5600 Fishers Lane,
Rockville, Maryland 20852.

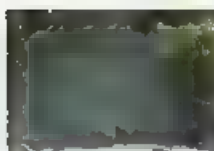
A similar mistake may be in the making
with a measles epidemic in Los Angeles
County. Increasing doubts have been cast
on the vaccine's effectiveness, and manu-
facturers warn of possible fever, convul-
sions, encephalitis, shock or death when it
is given to children who have already had
measles or various other diseases. Never-
theless, California clinics are allegedly
dispensing the serum en masse with no
questions or physical examination.

Vitamin C Medics Claim Virus Cure

Doctors using megadoses of vitamin C in
their practices have found it their most
effective weapon against virus diseases
such as colds, measles, chicken pox, en-
cephalitis, viral pneumonia, hepatitis and
many others. Pioneer vitamin-C therapist
Dr. Fred Klenner explains that massive
doses of the nutrient release large
amounts of oxygen throughout the body.
This "flash oxidation" burns away the
protective protein coating on a virus,
making it vulnerable to the body's de-
fenses. It also stimulates secretion of the
disease-fighting hormone interferon, re-
ports University of Oregon pathologist Dr.
Benjamin Siegel. Sufferers from viral dis-
eases should take 25 grams per day if they
cannot get vitamin C shots, says Klenner. □

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Ken & Donna K., Aspen, Colo.
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Tim K. (store owner) Glendale, Calif.
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Gary K., Phoenix, Arizona
Hey Guys,
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Nancy G., Detroit, Michigan
Dear Thai Power,
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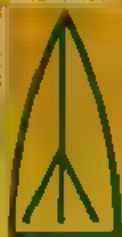
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Bayh, Bayh Boobird— Decrim to Pay DEA

Indiana Senator Birch Bayh has introduced a Carter-backed bill to decriminalize marijuana and use the money saved to pay for more intense DEA action against smugglers. Bayh demanded that the federal drug agencies "get out of the business of making headlines" and concentrate on "major traffickers of high-risk drugs." The bill proposes an Oregon-type civil fine of \$100 for possession and non-profit transfer of grass. Bayh stated he also plans to offer an amendment that would end all federal jurisdiction in small sales or possession cases.

Jersey Dad-to-Be Loses Abortion Plea

New Jersey carpenter John Rothenberger failed in legal efforts to prevent his girlfriend from aborting their baby. Superior Court Judge Robert Clifford issued a restraining order barring the abortion until the state supreme court could hear the case, but Wendy Chasalow had the operation anyway. The couple broke up over the incipient infant, and Rothenberger argued a father's right to save the fetus because he was prepared to raise the child himself.

DEA Nixes Homegrown Poppies

The Drug Enforcement Administration turned down requests by American doctors and pharmaceutical companies to allow domestic production of codeine poppies. During June hearings, spokesmen for the American Medical Association and the du Pont, Merck, Mallinckrodt and S. B. Pennick drug companies testified that U.S. poppy farms are needed to avert a shortage of medical codeine.

The Health, Education and Welfare Department denied any impending shortage, and the DEA and State Department said the proposal would be a slap in the face to countries where the feds are muscling farmers out of the poppy fields. However, the poppy under consideration,

Papaver bracteatum, produces the codeine precursor thebaine rather than the opium yielded by the embattled *Papaver somniferum*.

Locker Search Nails Files

Law clerk Barbara Stoesser lost her job and almost went to jail for keeping a clean desk in her Bonn, Germany, office. She dealt with the overload of cases in her "In" basket by filing them in public lockers at a local railway station. Expired time limits saved many drivers from traffic court fines in the 300 cases that tumbled out of the lockers during a collection of unclaimed luggage.

DEA Smuggler Profile Shows Court Bad Side

Regional DEA offices have developed "drug courier profiles" to show agents whom to finger, but the technique lost its first major court test. The U.S. Sixth Circuit Court of Appeals reversed a conviction that resulted from an arrest based on the feds' suspicion checklist.

Robert Ross McCaleb and Brenda Page were detained on arrival at Detroit's Metro Airport because they had only one suitcase, had flown to Los Angeles the day before and "seemed nervous." The court said these observations fell far short of



probable cause for search or arrest. The narcotics unit did their case even further when they allegedly coerced McCaleb into unlocking his bag without a search warrant.

Other "telltale" traits include using an alias and buying a ticket with small bills.

Fake Dope, Real Jail

Montanan John Eugene Hendricks unknowingly burned a narc in a \$30 sale of Methedrine that turned out to be caffeine and sugar. But he found that the state doesn't care what you actually have, as long as you think you're selling illegal highs. The Montana Supreme Court upheld Hendricks's conviction and sentence even though he was technically clean when nabbed.

Much of the case information in "Law" courtesy of Peter Meyers, chief counsel of NORML.

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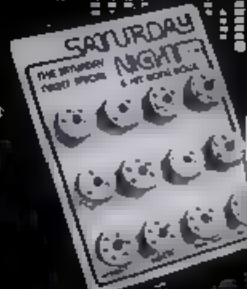
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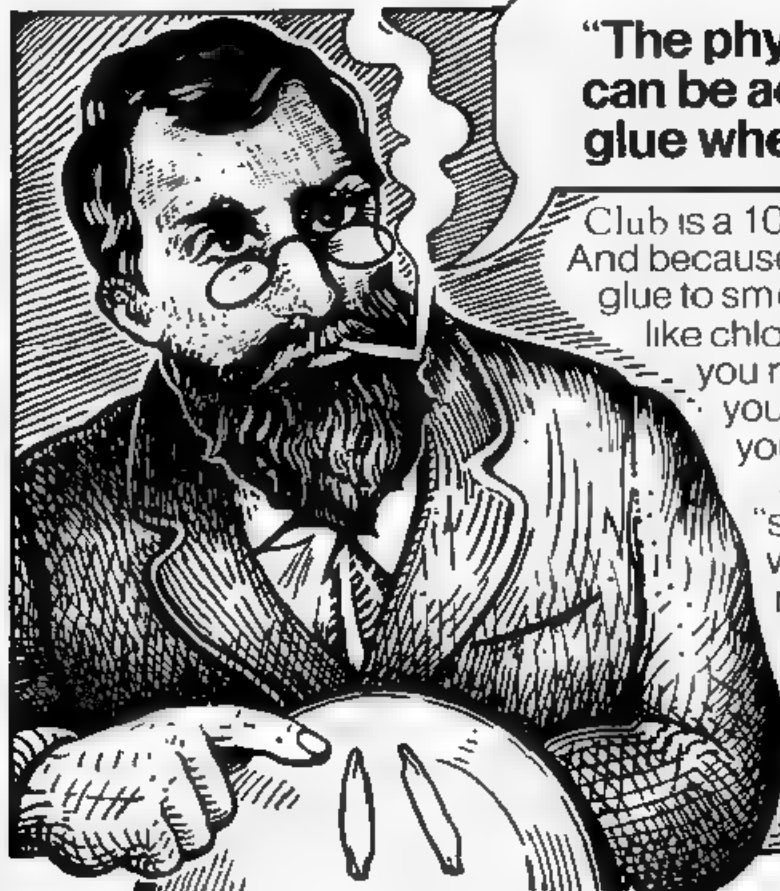
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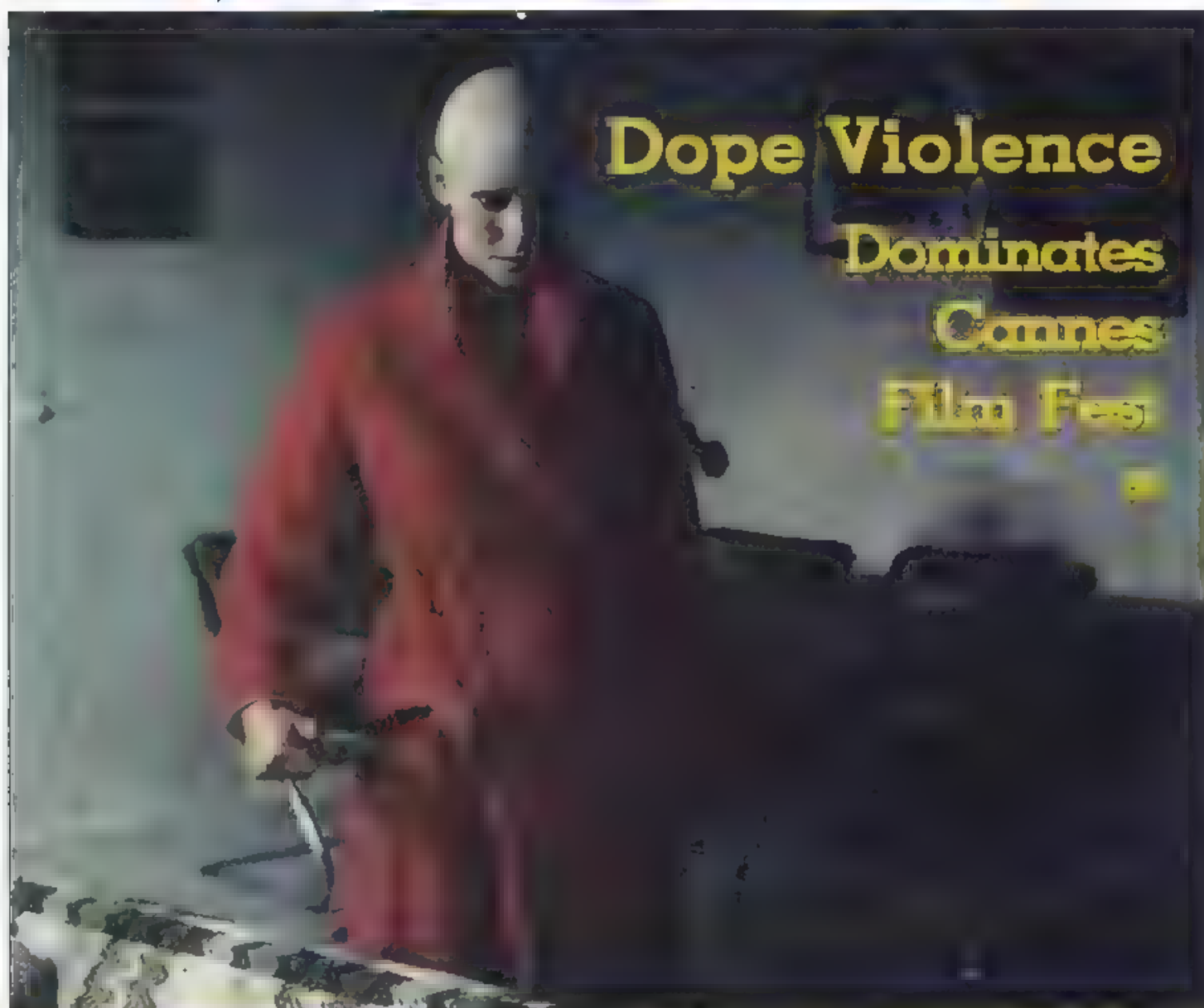
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AMERICA'S LEADING NEWSMAGAZINE

Sept. '77

No. 25



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Courtesy P. Gregory Springer

Action modified with weirdness dominates upcoming dope flicks. Above from *Pure Shit*, left from *Acapulco Gold* right from *The Rubber Gun*.

Dopers Score Big at Cannes

by Gregory Springer

The most prominent cafe on the Riviera strip at Cannes is called the Drugstore, although it dispenses only Pernod, coffee and the like. But it was a fitting center for the filmophiles who gathered to swap talk, egos and money, because this year's Cannes festival revived that old celluloid star, the doper.

A Swedish comment on youthful lifestyles entitled *What the Hell Jack* was advertised as. "A gang of Stockholm young people who drink beer, smoke hash, fuck and philosophize—the whole time dreading their future." It was a bad translation, maybe. From America there was *Acapulco Gold*, a typical churned-out chase of violence and revenge that starred the inevitable Marjoe Gortner. The press kits for *Acapulco Gold* included an empty pack of rolling papers.

Blue Sunshine is a sure-fire drive-in product. At Cannes, it was plugged as "science fact/fiction." *Blue Sunshine*, it is revealed, is a mutant form of LSD that was supposedly distributed in 1967. The users of the drug became deranged ten years after ingestion. First they go bald, then munch aspirins and best of all, slice up their neighbors

and children with knives and axes. *Blue Sunshine* is thus dubbed "a chromosome time bomb."

The ringer came with the end credits. An announcement read: "Wayne Mulligan [the star jock] is today confined to the Santa Barbara State Hospital. There are still 255 doses of *Blue Sunshine* unaccounted for that were made and

distributed in September 1967."

Next came *The Rubber Gun*, whose hook read, "The kids your mother never let you play with. Self-portrait of a generation. Huck Finn grows up on coke."

The most talked-about film at Cannes this year (as bleak, wet and grueling as ever before) was *Pure Shit*. Director Bert DeLong recruited

reformed heroin users for his script which was a compilation of real addict experiences compressed into a 48-hour story. "Otherwise, an honest 48 hours for a junkie might be nothing more than a shot of some bloke staring at his toes."

Look for these flicks this fall, as the dealer replaces the cop, cowboy and lover as culture hero.



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Batman Hangs on Gallery Wall

by Irving Shushnick

The opening of the Fantasy and Comic Arts Exhibition provided the perfect excuse for 200 of the comics industry's heavies to pack the New York Comic Arts Gallery in midtown Manhattan recently. Luminaries from the comics world boozed and gabbed, mingling with artists such as Harvey Kurtzman, Ralph Reese, Spider Webb, Jeff Jones, Howard Chaykin and Bernie Wrightson.

On nearby walls were two original oil paintings by Bernie "Swamp Thing" Wrightson, panels from the popular National Lampoon strip, "One Year Affair," by Ralph Reese and Byron Preiss, works by Jeff "Idyll" Jones, Howard "Sword of Sorcery" Chaykin and Howard "Barefootz" Cruse. The glowing panels of Kurtzman's "Little Annie Fanny" had been loaned by Playboy expressly for this exhibit, representing the first well-produced adult comics.

Representing the West Coast underground cartoon scene were panels by Trina. Representing another branch of fantasy art was Spider Webb, the tattooist, whose works were both on the walls and on several people in the crowd.

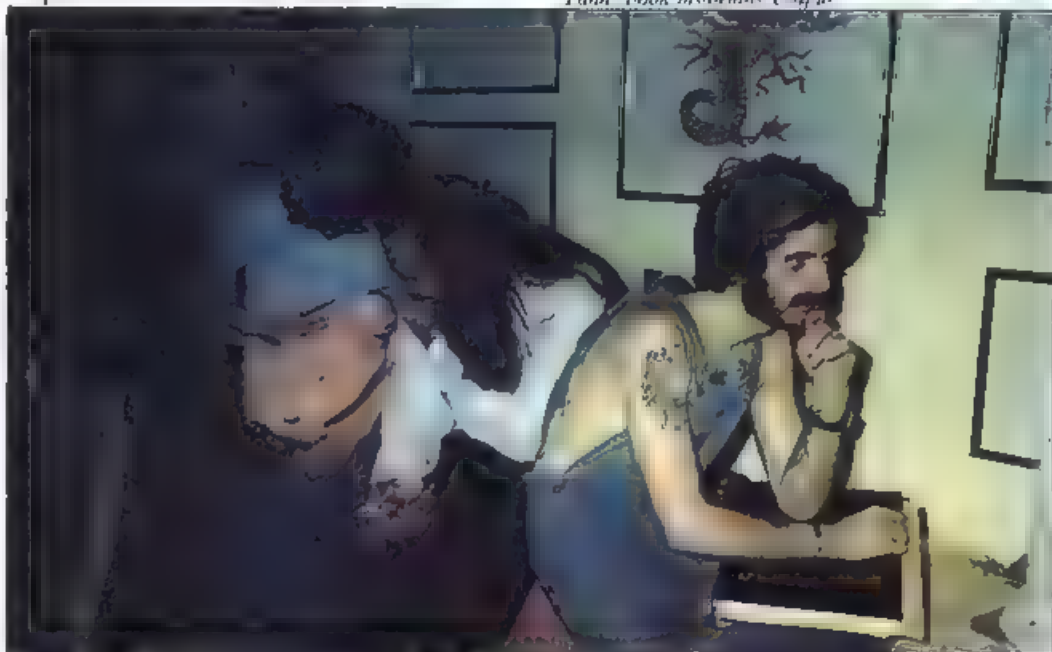
The gallery has been open for a year and has been doing brisk business in original comic art. There have been one-person shows featuring Jeff Jones and M. W. Kaluta, and gallery director Mark Rindner says he is looking forward to future shows devoted to the works of Bernie Wrightson, the Marvel artists, Bob "Batman" Kane and the European "Metal Hurlant" cartoonists.

The gallery has become a focal point for comic art information and a gathering spot for comic artists. It is one of the few galleries in the world where they can flog their original works to collectors for prices of up to \$500. Catalogs may be obtained by writing to the New York Comic Arts Gallery, 132 East 58th St., New York, N.Y. 10022.



Charles Galloway

Comic book becomes canvas



Charles Galloway

Spider Webb studies his art.



Charles Galloway

Spider Webb and gallery goer



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HIGH CRIMES

Speed Attack Banzais Japan

Japan is speeding through its worst postwar amphetamine craze since the great Nipponese upper epidemic of 1954. A government white paper cited a 30-percent increase in amphetamine cases over a one-year period, reporting 11,000 busts and 18,000 sales of illegal stimulants last year.

The Japanese press, not known for its restrained verbiage, is ablaze with headlines like "Addicts Do Anything for 'Devilish White Powder'" and "Shizuoka Drug Ring Clobbered by Police." One morning, papers reported that 10,000 cops arrested 1,600 "gangsters" in a mammoth nationwide sweep. Total arrests in the speed crackdown, 7,250 by midsummer.

• Mounties have pulled the biggest drug pop in Canadian history, seizing 13,000 pounds of grass and hash in a 75-foot schooner off the coast of Nova Scotia. The Dudley Doornights pounced when fishermen reported seeing the *Delta's* "suspicious exploration" of the Blanford coastline, a prime unloading stretch for weed shipments from Colombia. Dry-docked with the *Delta* were two American and three Canadian suspects, along with a truck, motorcycle and smaller pleasure boat.

• Canadian marijuana magnate Robert Rowbotham has lost his seven-month trial for conspiracy to smuggle hashish, despite his impassioned plea to the jury invoking Buddha, Marx, Jesus and the Beatles. Rowbotham, 26, also had Norman Mailer on his side as a character witness, but to no avail. The defendant received a 14-year jail sentence and is appealing the conviction.

• Among its victims in the last fiscal year, the DEA numbers 61 pharmacists, 78 M.D.'s, 17 registered nurses, seven osteopaths, four physicians' receptionists, two dentists, two practical nurses, two veterinarians and a podiatrist in a pear tree. • In a bust that is sure to have foiled plans for the largest plantation ever conceived in the Pacific Northwest, sheriff's deputies landed on 700 pounds of pot seeds near Sacheen Lake, Washington.

• What was billed by English police promoters as the biggest combined antidrug offensive ever mounted in Europe boiled down to something quite smaller. About 500,000 hits of acid were seized in London, Wales, Scotland and rural Britain and the number of suspects, originally announced as 100, was reduced to 23. • Colombian grass has been coming in for a lot of heat recently, even before leaving Colombia's shores and airstrips. Police picked up 24

tons parked in hundredweight sacks ready for export 40 miles from Riohacha in El Infernito ("Little Hell"), northeast of Bogota, 875 pounds of packed grass and 30,000 bushes were captured. On the Caribbean coast, two trucks were picked up with loads totalling 5 tons. Narcs of the national police F-2 unit said these loads were connected with the 35 tons busted in the spring on board the freighter *Night Train* in the Bahamas.

• Florida prosecutors fear seven major drug cases in that state may be washed away because star narc witnesses Michael Dailey and Wayne Tobey have admitted to lying in another case ("High Crimes," August). State attorneys are afraid no jury or judge will believe charges in which the two were chief evidence-gatherers.

• Hanover County, Virginia, is hiding its stash. After parking a semi with 7,000 pounds of seized grass in front of the courthouse, the heat started worrying that someone might pull a nip. They moved the truck to an undisclosed location.

Busted at 90

Guy Henry Turner hermit, stargazer and backwoods Georgia guru—is headed for the high history books as the oldest American ever popped for selling pot. An undercover narc busted the 90-year-old toker for selling him the gigantic total of a half a joint. Says Turner of the charges, "The hell with the law."

Turner has lived 55 years in the middle of a pecan grove, isolated from the world. He gained local fame as somewhat of a mystic by counseling teenagers about the stars

and the assorted voices he hears. One of the voices is Jesus telling him the world is coming to an end October 12. But just in case the Lord's wrong, the old man plans to keep smoking reefer to relieve his asthma.

"Sometimes the kids ask me if they can roll me one. Sometimes I take one. I have never sold one but I've never bought one bit. [I smoke] one at a time and just in a friendly manner, just to be sociable."

Attack and Retaliation



Colombian police gather in front of F-2 headquarters in Santa Marta prior to their raid on marijuana plantation. (See story, page 21.)



Combat clad cops in pursuit of field ford the Tapias River in grass-rich Guajira region of northwestern Colombia.



3.

Field is taken along with three growers.



A short time later this policeman was assassinated in Riohacha in retaliation for raids against the growers.

COCAINE CONFIDENTIAL

Plant Man Pops Virgin Coke

A Virgin Islands inspector who normally goes after plants and bugs put the touch on two women trying to gain back-door access to the U.S. at St. Thomas—with 17½ pounds of coke in the false sides of their suitcases.

The bust, one of the biggest in recent months, was initiated through the good offices of the Department of Agriculture, not Customs. An agricultural inspector alerted unwary Customs agents to his suspicion about the ladies, who had flown from St. Martin with the \$4 million in loot. The suspects said they were waitresses from the Bronx.

- The high-flying female connection in the cocaine case against Miami Dolphins Don Reese and Randy Crowder says she has snorted with at least seven other NFL players. Camille Richardson, an Eastern Airlines stewardess and Miami sophisticate, allegedly arranged for Reese and Crowder to sell a pound of coke, without her knowing the buyers were nars. Dolphins owner Joe Robbie, meanwhile suspended the two linemen saying "football players owe a unique obligation to the children who idolize them." Earlier rumors had Reese and Crowder being transferred to noseguard positions.
- Customs at Los Angeles Airport took one look at the towering wedgies on two women flying in from Peru and decided to pop open their platforms. Inside the hollow shoes were 1.6 pounds of refined tooz blowing in from Lima to L.A.
- The DEA has busted what it calls

an international cocaine smuggling syndicate in Phoenix, arresting nine persons suspected of being part of a Colombian-based organization that supplied coke to ten states, Puerto Rico and four foreign countries.

- More than a pound of blow was seized in a Shreveport, Louisiana, hotel by a 12-person, city-county-federal strike force that spent six months setting up the case. The 492-gram bust was the largest cocaine seizure in the bayou state's history.

- Chicago's cops were astonished at the sophisticated interior decoration of a dealer busted for a pound of coke. "The apartment looked like a chemistry lab," said one cop who described various drug-processing implements. "And we understand that the dealer had a low inventory."

- A traveling salesperson, who usually deals in wholesale T-shirts, from Arizona lost 16 one-ounce bags of snow to Miami police dur-

ing a working vacation in Florida.

- A bizarre coke scam is going down in San Jose, Costa Rica where a local newspaper is reporting that three Americans seized with a quarter-pound of uncult coke actually came to the island republic to kill fugitive financier Robert Vesco, wanted by the Justice Department for embezzlement, mail fraud and illegal contributions to Richard Nixon in 1972.

Quoting unnamed sources, the newspaper La Hora said that one of the suspects is "definitely Mafia" and had either been paid to kill Vesco or was gunning for him "to win indulgences from certain sectors opposed to the financier." A Vesco spokesperson said he wasn't surprised, while the Tico Times, another local paper, claimed its competitor La Hora "has been linked to Vesco financing."

HIGH TIMES HIT PARADE



Customs ships and nosy nars in Florida continue to run roughshod over importers. Don't you get caught with a hot stow. Look out for sniffing dogs and connections that ask too many questions.


This month's recap of major pot busts:

- 30,000 lbs. St. Petersburg, Fla., trawler *Lady Mark*, 3 arrests
- 8,000 lbs. Great Abaco Island, Bahamas, yacht *Ivoru*, 4 arrests
- 8,000 lbs.; W. Dade County, Fla., a van and 4 cars, 4 arrests
- 6,400 lbs. Ft. Lauderdale, Fla., 2 speedboats, 1 arrest
- 5,000 lbs., Dade County, Fla., truck, 1 arrest
- 3,500 lbs., 6 miles off Broward's Coast, Fla., jetsam
- 3,000 lbs. Brooksville, Fla., DC 3, 5 arrests
- 2,800 lbs. Lighthouse Pt., Fla., 28-foot boat, 5 arrests
- 150 lbs. hashish, Kirkland, Quebec inside 10 fire extinguishers, 2 arrests
- 2 lbs. hashish oil, Miami Airport, taped to runner's leg, 1 arrest




Robert Merman


Mystery plane crash in Bermuda Triangle. Twin-engine Beechcraft lies in surf off Gun Cay near Bimini where two men died. Sixteen pounds of coke were found in the wreckage, but cops are denying the cache while they investigate.



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Study Finds Wages of Sin Good Pay

by Dawn Sylvester

A new crime study holds an unexpected bonus for the aimless graduate and unemployed...professional hunts on how to make it in careers your guidance counselor didn't tell you about. Although not intended as a job counseling handbook, the study, entitled *Crime Pays*, explains in detail how millions of Americans are leading rewarding, creative lives in such fields as shoplifting, house burgling, pickpocketing and dope smuggling.

According to author Tom Plate, a professional journalist who says he is not personally involved in crooked business, the risks of many illegal careers are frequently outweighed by the benefits. For example, by his calculation, a full-time cocaine smuggler makes approximately \$165,000 a year, and a part-time marijuana importer with a straight job on the side has no trouble maintaining an affluent suburban lifestyle. Of course, there are professional hazards such as eluding the police and the F.R.S., and having to obtain market tips by hanging out in unwholesome waterfront bars.

Plate says his study challenges the widespread liberal notion that criminals are the products of deprivation driven to antisocial behavior

by their unfortunate circumstances. Criminologists, he says, arrive at this theory by confining their research to prisons, where they encounter only persons who have failed in their vocations. "I obtained all my information from people outside of jail," he says. To compute the estimated annual incomes of



Ken Landgraf

various types of criminals, he researched "inside" figures from criminals' underworld associates with data on their sales volume, overhead and inventory.

If Plate himself were to opt for a

shadier path in life, what field would he choose? Without hesitating for a second, he replies, "Grass smuggling, of course. If you fail, the risks of imprisonment are low, and if you succeed, the profits are high."

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Shirac hash	scarce of late	oz	1-2
Mazar-i-Sharif	excellent	oz	40-60
		oz	3-7
		oz	100-200
		oz	5-10
		oz	125-250

AUSTRALIA

Domestic grass	good prospects	oz	20-35
Nepalese hash	fingers and temple buds	oz	200-325
Indian hash	poorly made	oz	75-150
Afghani hash	rare	oz	900-1250
LSD	some blotter	oz	70-90
Cocaine	heavily cut	oz	800-1100
		oz	100-140
		oz	1100-1550
		oz	2-5
		oz	100-225
		oz	75-125
		oz	1600-2200

AZORE ISLANDS

Angolan grass	good when found	oz	35-60
Mozambique grass	resiny, very good	oz	450-700
Quassuludes	just stash	oz	80-90
Dormadinas	around	oz	500-800
		oz	2-3
		oz	100-225
		oz	75-125
		oz	50-100

BELGIUM

Nigerian grass	just stash	oz	30-50
Chitra hash	fresh excellent	oz	425-550
Lebanese hash	OK	oz	45-75
Nepalese hash	just fingers	oz	40-60
LSD	scarce	oz	425-550
Cocaine	fair to good rock	oz	45-75
		oz	450-800
		oz	2-5
		oz	225-350
		oz	80-110
		oz	1050-1700

CANADA

Domestic	improving slightly	oz	15-30
Regular Mexican	constant	oz	150-325
Top-grade Mexican	hard to find	oz	15-35
Commercial	still available, decent	oz	175-325
Connoisseur	some gold buds	oz	35-60
Colombian	rare	oz	450-825
Hawaiian	thick black slabs	oz	35-50
Afghani hash	poorly made	oz	400-550
Indian hash	quantity on decline	oz	50-85
Kashmiri hash	several types, most good	oz	450-700
Afghani hash oil	tremendous when found	oz	200-300
Honey oil	winduppane, good	oz	2200-3250
LSD	decent	oz	175-225
Cocaine	around	oz	1400-2000
		oz	25-50

COLOMBIA

Santa Maria gold, red	supply declining	oz	5-15
Machu Picchu	some of the best	oz	40-75
Punta roja	top notch smoke	oz	5-10
Colombian hash	poor to fair	oz	45-75
Colombian hash oil	mostly for export	oz	25-50
LSD	scarce of late	oz	2000-3000
		oz	150-225
		oz	1800-2400
		oz	2-5
		oz	150-250

Mushrooms	oz	3-5
Cocaine	oz	30-45
	oz	250-400
	oz	4000-6000

DENMARK

Lebanese hash	quantity and quality fluctuating	oz	2-5
Moroccan hash	state of late	oz	850-950
LSD	brown blotter	oz	150-250
		oz	600-800
		oz	2-3
		oz	125-175

ECUADOR

Colombian grass	good quality around	oz	7-50-10
Ecuadorian red	sweet smoke	oz	75-150
Cocaine	some of the best	oz	3-5
San Pedro cactus	good high	oz	60-125
		oz	25-40
		oz	450-700
		oz	free

ENGLAND

Moroccan hash	thin green slabs, OK	oz	60-80
Lebanese hash	fresh red good	oz	800-800
Afghani hash	prime, scarce	oz	70-95
Colombian hash	poor import	oz	800-1000
Hash oil	usually Afghani	oz	75-125
LSD	some Lebanese	oz	800-1200
Cocaine	mostly fair	oz	50-85
Mandrax	stable situation	oz	500-800
		oz	25-35
		oz	375-500
		oz	1-150
		oz	75-50
		oz	50-125
		oz	2200
		oz	1-3
		oz	75-200

FRANCE

Yamba	rare	oz	50-80
Colombian	supply on decline	oz	450-700
Moroccan	good when fresh	oz	35-85
Afghani hash	several types, mostly good	oz	460-750
Chitra hash	tremendous high	oz	25-50
LSD	scarce	oz	350-500
Opium	poor to good	oz	5-10
		oz	800-1200
		oz	50-75
		oz	600-750
		oz	2-50-5
		oz	200-325
		oz	10-15

GERMANY

Lebanese hash	pliable red good quality and quantity	oz	2-5
Afghani hash	small amounts of prime	oz	50-75
Moroccan hash	poor to fair	oz	500-725
Thai sticks	good when found	oz	35-60
LSD	blotter is best	oz	475-575
Cocaine	around	oz	10-20
		oz	750-1000
		oz	2-50-5
		oz	200-350
		oz	85-110
		oz	425-750

HONG KONG

Mainland weed	improving slightly	oz	8-12
Thai grass	quality and quantity stable	oz	115-225
Thai sticks	available	oz	50-100
Afghani hash	scarce	oz	75-1200
		oz	8-15
		oz	75-125
		oz	7-60-15
		oz	75-175

ITALY

Colombian grass	fair quality and quantity	oz	75-150
Lebanese hash	just decent	oz	600-850
Afghani hash	good to excellent	oz	100-125
Moroccan hash	if green, OK	oz	100 gm 300-400
LSD	blotter good	oz	75-120
Cocaine	some good rock	oz	3-50-5
Speed	available	oz	300-350
		oz	45-75
		oz	900-1100
		oz	50-75
		oz	1000-1300

MEXICO

Torreón violet	scarce	oz	5-10
Guadalupe green	fair to good	oz	80-125
Oaxacan tops	sweet smoke	oz	5-10
Guerrero gold	excellent when found	oz	3-5
Puebla	fluctuating supply and quality	oz	50-75
		oz	5-10
		oz	75-125
		oz	4-8
		oz	50-100

Magic mushrooms	around	oz	5-10
Cocaine	smooth flake	oz	75-100
Opium	good	oz	5-7-50
		oz	55-75
		oz	400-500
		oz	5000

THE NETHERLANDS

Senegalese & Congolese	quantity on decline	oz	55-90
Domestic grass	improving slightly	oz	450-625
Moroccan hash	usually stale	oz	20-40
Lebanese hash	dark red, good	oz	250-360
Pakistani hash	just OK	oz	50-75
Kashmiri hash	excellent when found	oz	400-575
Hash oil	occasional Afghani	oz	60-85
LSD	fair at best	oz	600-600
Cocaine	fluctuating supply and quality	oz	60-75
Burmese opium	dreamy	oz	460-650
		oz	65-100
		oz	600-800
		oz	1650-2100
		oz	2-4
		oz	150-225
		oz	2-4
		oz	1300-2000
		oz	3-5
		oz	60-85

TURKEY

Turkish hash	excellent	oz	5-10
Antonia hash	scarce	oz	75-80
LSD	unavailable	oz	7-50-10
Opium	wonderful head	oz	100-175
		oz	3-7-50
		oz	60-85

USA

Regular Mexican	bricked green, poor to fair	oz	15-30
Top-grade Mexican	green/gold gueriro	oz	100-300
Jamaican	immature	oz	50-150
Commercial	supply drying up	oz	200-1000
Colombian	gold, red, black, scarce	oz	20-30
Connoisseur	large demand, poor supply	oz	250-425
Hawaiian	several types most good	oz	25-40
Thai sticks	just stash	oz	275-450
Nigerian grass	poor to good	oz	40-65
Moroccan hash	cloth-sacked red	oz	350-550
Lebanese hash	surfboard slabs, good	oz	175-250
Afghani hash	dry fingers	oz	1500-3000
Nepalese hash	just OK	oz	20-30
Paki hash	sweet tasting	oz	180-250
Lebanese hash oil	potent black	oz	40-85
Afghani hash oil	excellent quality	oz	500-850
Honey oil	rare of late	oz	75-110
THC	mostly blotter	oz	900-1200
LSD	available	oz	100-150
Psilocybin mushrooms	usually rock poor to good	oz	1000-1600
Cocaine	scarce	oz	120-200
Quassuludes	scarce	oz	1400-2000
		oz	120-185
		oz	1400-2000
		oz	120-165
		oz	1300-1700
		oz	20-30
		oz	325-450
		oz	25-35
		oz	350-500
		oz	25-45
		oz	375-600
		oz	1-3
		oz	75-175
		oz	1-3
		oz	75-150
		oz	20-35
		oz	150-250
		oz	75-125
		oz	1200-1900
		oz	3-5
		oz	200-400

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Lousy Movies, Great Plot

A shot rang out in the night
"There was only one assassin, I said.
"He acted alone...."

It was really only a truck backfiring I've been dining on this one for years. Gets a laugh almost every time. Why, then, has Hollywood consistently failed to exploit our assassination obsession with at least one top-drawer megahit since, shall we say, 1963? Why has the film industry all but ignored the box-office potential of the crimes of the century? Who's covering it all up?

In fact, since *Dallas* there have been approximately 100 U.S.-distributed films that deal in one way or another with the subject of political assassination. Name one. All right, since you mention it, *To Catch a Spy*, later redubbed *The Vulcan Affair* when it became the TV pilot for "The Man from UNCLE." The plot revolved around Napoleon Solo's and Ilya Kuryakin's attempt to thwart the assassination of an African leader by rival intelligence agency THRUSH. Their benevolent, avuncular heroism fit well into the popular mid-Sixties image of the CIA—as an honorable, efficient agency of democracy—basically a hangover from our wartime love affair with the CIA's predecessor, the OSS.

American intelligence was trustworthy, loyal and obedient in those halcyon days, as we learned from films like *The Manchurian Candidate*, in which the Chinese were brainwashing G.I.'s captured in Korea and sending them home to kill the president. At the same time, as we've learned since, the CIA actually was experimenting with LSD to achieve similar results. One of life's little ironies.

Today a more cynical ambiance governs the few films that broach this unfashionable topic. In *Three Days of the Condor*, *The Parallax View* and *The Domino Principle*, Robert Redford, Warren Beatty and Gene Hackman, respectively, untangle the threads of vast, malignant conspiracies to grease the chute for liberal politicians. In each film, the hero finds himself rising from the Machiavellian ridiculous to the Kafkaesque sublime as the conspiracies he has uncovered overwhelm his one-man efforts to defuse them. Alas, these films get lost in their own labyrinthine conspiratorial entrails, leaving us to marvel at the

infinitely mirrored walls of the conspiracy in question, without ever implying that the fictitious conspiracy corresponds to any particular political entity back in real life, or indeed that any conspiracy has any purpose beyond its own conspiratorial perfection as an objet d'art. So far, the most powerful censors of conspiracy films have probably been the studio libel lawyers, reminding us that any resemblance between characters in the film and actual persons living or dead is entirely coincidental.



Political assassination in *The Parallax View*, which starred Warren Beatty as a reporter trying to uncover a national conspiracy

The outstanding assassination film of recent vintage was Martin Scorsese's *Taxi Driver*, which shows Robert DeNiro as a glandular psychopath who plays with the idea of assassinating a liberal candidate *faute de mieux*. Like its predecessors, *Taxi Driver* copped out: rather than receding into the bowels of occult conspiracy theory, it made the Lone Nut Theory a palpable, even likable, reality. Rumor has it that Fidel Castro screened *Taxi Driver* three times, chuckling heartily.

Finally, connoisseurs of conspiracy will fondly recollect *Executive Action*, which explicitly portrayed the assassination of John F. Kennedy as the work of a cabal of CIA torpedoes and oil barons, with the fatal shot coming from the grassy knoll. Although *Executive Action* looked as if it was shot by a KGB crew through the one-way mirror in a Moscow brothel, the producers claim that it has earned \$30 million since its release. It would not have been made at all but for the persistence of producer Ed Louis and writer/researchers Ted Charack and Donald Freed.

During the filming of *Executive Action*, a reliable source close to the producer warned him that someone would attempt to sabotage the film. Louis closed the set and hired armed guards to protect it and the actors and crew for the rest of the lensing. Later, when members of cast and crew obtained their FBI files under the Freedom of Information Act, they learned that they had all been under heavy surveillance during the filming. Indeed, the FBI has refused to release some of the files to this day.

Besides working on *Executive Action*, writer Charack was instrumental in the

production of *The Second Gun*, dealing with the Robert Kennedy murder conspiracy. Charack related that the Los Angeles Police Department, besides "losing" most of the evidence of the conspiracy, bodily attacked one of the producers of the film, Stuart Whitman, drugged him and incarcerated him in an L.A. county mental hospital against his will. Later, distribution rights to *The Second Gun* were acquired by American Films, which is alleged to be a CIA front on whose shelves the movie is now gathering dust.

Charack did have one opportunity to screen the film for 1,000 members of the Academy of Forensic Science, but not before his only print was mysteriously destroyed.

Charack's *Executive Action* co-author, Donald Freed, adapted the script for *The Senator Must Die* from his best-selling investigative book, *RFK Must Die*. He succeeded in interesting a producer and a distributor. Sal Mineo was to play the part of Sirhan Sirhan in the film. Mineo received a series of threatening phone calls warning him to cease and desist. Then, on Thursday, March 12, 1976, Mineo was brutally murdered in the parking lot of his modest L.A. apartment house.

None of these coincidences fully explains the failure of show business to exploit the huge market for assassinoLOGY. If Hollywood producers and writers of greater standing than Charack and Freed ever have kicked the idea around, then presumably they have met correspondingly massive intimidation. Perhaps they simply feel that they can't compete with TV. Or, in the cases of *Malcolm X* and *Martin Luther King*, they still might feel that the murder of black men just isn't news. Another reason could be artistic: because the victim of an assassination is unaware of his or her stalkers until the bitter end, there can be no personal conflict to dramatize.

For my money, the best assassination picture of all time is *The Godfather Part II*, in which Al Pacino observes that "If history teaches us anything, it is that anyone, anywhere, can be killed." Boy, that Mario Puzo sure can write.

Lee Michaels

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GUTS, by John Cale (Island ILPS 9459). A



list of song titles from this attempt at a "Best of John Cale" collection ("Guts," "Mary Lou," "Helen of Troy," "Pablo Picasso," "Leaving It All Up to You," "Fear Is a Man's Best Friend," "Gun," "Dirtyass Rock 'n' Roll," "Heart-break Hotel") should indicate one of two things: (1) Either you've heard everything on the album except the previously unreleased "Mary Lou," a song which certainly confirms the partisan's belief that John Cale is an instinctive, distinctive, rock 'n' roll disciple of the church of churning bass salvation via idiosyncrasy deluxe; or (2), if you're lamentably unfamiliar with John Cale—man, myth and material—you should gather from this quickie nine song introductory lesson the hardly disputable fact that John Cale is great! More fun than Sal Mineo! More handsome and even better than—dare I say this, knowing the man, fully aware he could clobber me for treason—Handsome Dick Manitoba!

Kidding aside, why does an ever-waxing number of rock 'n' rollers fed-up with the banality of established "acts" give a loving sigh and breathe easily whenever in ear and eyeshot of this artist? It isn't simply because of the man's grisly charisma and sensitive/sensual looks. Being hooked on John Cale lies in the crafting of his music—emotive strands of rage yearning, melancholy, tenderness, violence and babbling lunacy intercrafted with lush visual imagery. His restrained feeling curbed by politeness and decency is someday liable to erupt like a latter day Vesuvius in the Sierra Nevada, lava coursing into Hollywood Hills, where record company executives sleep. In this respect, Cale's work sometimes reminds me of Andrew Wyeth's unnerving classic, *Christina's World*. What could the subject of each artwork be thinking? Of ideas yellowy morbid, or of deep purple splendor? Of course, no one can say.

Then again, Guts is not exactly Cale's "Best-of" collection. Being an Island album, none of his art previous to *Fear*, *Slow Dazzle* and *Helen of Troy* is included. If you're going to go about the pursuit of the aural ecstasies of John Cale properly, buy *Paris 1919*, *Vintage Violence*,

Church of Anthrax and *The Academy in Peril*—besides everything he's ever produced.

—Trixie A. Balm

CAT SCRATCH FEVER, by Ted Nugent (Epic JE 34700). The greatest thing about



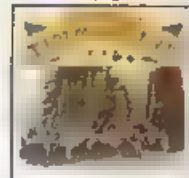
Ted Nugent albums is that you can take the needle and go track to track, and the first ten seconds of each one will really hook you. Nugent is the master of the hook, and as the masses will tell you, there is no heavier populist guitarist around. Nugent is mister high energy, which may come from avoiding vegetables altogether, feeding only on the meat he's killed with his bow and arrow. Or maybe it's just from being crazy. One thing for sure, it's not from reefer, kids, because Ted Nugent does not smoke pot. But this is still a high album that goes with almost anything from extra-strong Chock Full o' Nuts coffee with four sugars to Romilar CF, but what it really goes great with is violent physical exercise.

The masterpiece in this latest Nugent package is the title cut, which features one of the most effective, lowdown, obvious, simplistic riffs ever heard, with a great beat and quite elaborate yet tasteful psychedelic lead guitar. Also right up there is "Wang Dang Sweet Poontang," which explores the dynamics of velocity while essaying on the peculiar obsessive qualities of sexual attraction.

On "Death by Misadventure," Nugent gets it on around a fractured, syncopated beat, up the radioactive funk alley explored recently by Led Zeppelin on *Presence*. On "Live It Up," he does a heavy metal hand jive. Very interesting.

Ted Nugent has been around a long time and could probably never be arty even if he wanted to be. For my money, the world would be a better place if every discotheque was legally required to play a Ted Nugent track every 90 minutes. As blatant, minimal and monolithic as Nugent is, he does cut through torpor like a laser through tartar sauce, injecting the aural environment with interesting commentary on physicality, violence, lust and the finer things in life. —Glenn O'Brien

THE GREAT TIMBER RUSH, by Timberline (Epic PE 34681). Country music in



the post-Eagle age has hitched itself to over-dubbed harmonies, perfect mixes and other studio tricks both plain and fancy. There just ain't no more barnyard in the boogie. Banjos have been de-twanged, fiddles smoothly orchestrated and guitar passages contrived to serve the greater hobgoblin of popular taste.

Timberline should be counted among



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the groups not drinking at the new trough
Their first lp, *The Great Timber Rush*,
may not be a ground breaker, but at least it
doesn't pander. You can, in fact, go plumb
crazy listenin' in. Timberline presents ten
originals here, but each cut brings to mind
some hoedown-hippies of the past. Pure
Prairie League rides again in "Love for
You," Loggins and Messina are hardly
flattered through imitation in "190 Blues"
and hints of Dan Fogelberg's whine haunt
"The Breakers Roll." "Sammy Came from
Illinois" sounds so much like a Rick
Roberts ballad, you can taste the Burritos.

Most of this well-crafted mimicry does
not bruise the ear. Still, these boys should
have listened to their mamas and stuck to
home cookin'. "Circlin'," a poetic original
with guest banjo and fiddle solo by the
Nitty Gritty Dirt Band's John McEuen, is
song enough to recommend the entire
album. Lead vocalist Jim Salestrom and
guitarist Dugg Duggan deal the lp's
splashiest chords with their co-written
finale, "On the Mesa." And you better
think twice if you hear Rusty Young and
Richie Furay on "Timberline" and "You,"
two Salestrom-Duggan romps in an early
Poco vein.

A few other songs go without comment,
but Peter Yarrow picks up the slack in his
cover notes. Yarrow doesn't say to give a
listen, but I will. Any band that's spent the
last six years backing up groups like
Lynyrd Skynyrd and the new Blood,
Sweat and Tears deserves some relief.

—Gary Putka

I REMEMBER YESTERDAY, by Donna
Summer (Casablanca NBLP 7056). Her



name is Summer, but
she's fast becoming the
disco-queen for all sea-
sons. And Casablan-
ca's got her. On
Casablanca's sound-
track album for *The
Deep*, Donna sings the theme, "Down
Deep Inside," the title of which is only
half as suggestive as her breathless vocals.
On Casablanca's *Shut Out*, by disco new-
comer Paul Jabara, Donna makes a guest
appearance cooing "Oooooh Paul" as his
disco dream-goddess.

I Remember Yesterday was lavishly
produced in Munich, with the full power
of the German disco machine behind
Summer. But here Donna is seeking to
expand her appeal beyond dance-hall
floors. While the album isn't very far off
the hustle-beaten path, it also features
several numbers that reveal Donna's roots
in popular music and, indeed, disco's
roots themselves.

The title cut is vaguely reminiscent of
the Savannah Band's smash "Cherchez la
Femme," but the others on the first side
are nods in the direction of Donna's early
years as a singer. "Love's Unkind" harkens
back to the Phil Spector sound of the
Ronettes, et al. "Back in Love" so accu-

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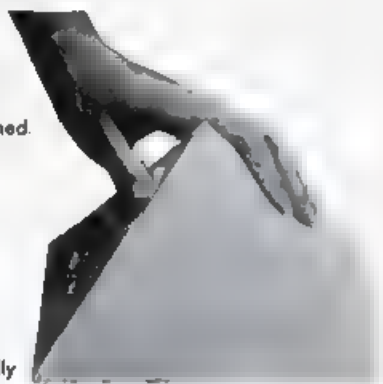
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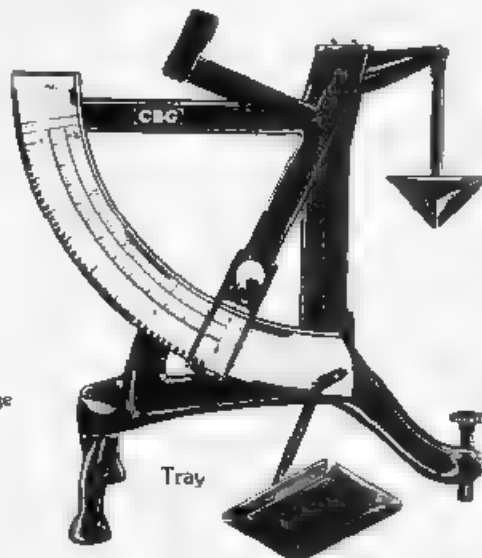
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rately pinpoints Diana Ross and the Supremes that the listener fully expects Ed Sullivan to lead applause at the close.

But the sounds here are big, and the production often quite impressive, so there is a newness to the album that helps to overshadow some of the derivative tendencies in the music. Side two features more contemporary sounds; "Take Me" the one that's getting the radio air play, is poignantly pretty with a chugging Moog bass that doesn't quit. More than her previous albums, *I Remember Yesterday* shows off Donna Summer's talent as a writer whose themes are often bitter-sweet, and as a singer whose voice is always convincing.

—Crispin McCormick Croe

A PERIOD OF TRANSITION, by Van Morrison (Warner Bros. BS-2987). Back



after a three year hiatus, Van Morrison is not angry anymore. On the cover of the album he appears self conscious and older than his 31 years. The gravel-throat-

singer has the anonymous appearance of the man sitting next to you at the bar. But his music is served up fresh and with assurance. He still cooks with the old magic: Irish soul with a cajun edge. He is a performer who can still blow minds with a kick-ass set as he did at the Last Waltz with Bob Dylan and the Band.

A Period of Transition is produced with a taste of creole pathos by Mac Rebennack, alias Dr. John the Night Thumper. Morrison delivers bouncy numbers and soulful sermonettes. The lyrics are awkward but effective, and the music is elegant r & b. Dr. John's devilish keyboards spice up the manic horn section, which is generally used with unusual reserve.

"It Fills You Up" is a slow swinger somewhere between bayou blues and Them's "Here Comes the Night," made frantic by the obsessive horn charts and background singers. "The Eternal Kansas City" asks the rhetorical question "Excuse me, do you know the way to Kansas City?" over and over, and the tune lumbers to a hot boogie of a conclusion.

"Flamingos Fly" is the natural favorite with its humorous horns and popping guitar to Morrison's moonstruck lyrics. In "Heavy Connection" love is the drug as Van sings "You came into my dream, from a whisper to a scream. . . it's a rare heavy connection," and fades out with great syncopated gyration. "A Cold Rain in August" is an unsuited sentimental rocker, delivered with extreme uncertainty, that ends this variegated album.

Morrison is in classic form here—the eternally competent rocker, perhaps the anti-punk. Looking like Irish poet Brendan Behan, he gazes, impassively, from the back cover toward his return to Great Britain and the concert trail. Van Morrison sings the blues we're used to; this is less a period of

transition than a continuation. True, some of the heat has been lost in the sophistication, but Morrison never just promises, he actually delivers. *Matthew Shaw*

LACE AND WHISKEY, by Alice Cooper (Warner Bros. BSK 3027). Leapin' lizards!



Alice Cooper is back, replete with a new album and a new set of identities designed to put any chameleon to shame. After years of assuming the unchallenged role of Satan for the Pepsi generation, Alice suffered the tragic fate of being out-deathed and out-creeped by the up-surgent punk movement. With his popularity on the wane, Alice rebelled. Seeking new forms of decadence, he ventured to Hollywood, making no concert appearances and immersing himself in television watching and golf, becoming a true vulture of the death culture. The result is *Lace and Whiskey*, the inner sleeve of which depicts Alice, sans vampire make-up, in the archetypal Sam Spade detective pose: teeth clenched, cigarette protruding, fondling a .38-caliber gun.

What does this all mean? Only that *Lace and Whiskey* puts nostalgia in a new light, creatively interplaying well-known media images and various aspects of the American dream. Alice transforms himself into Don Juan, Zorro and King Kong. The bizarre twist comes as Alice unlocks his closet to reveal that he's the queen, not the king, of the silver screen, and that he eats make-up for lunch.

In "You and Me," the best cut on the album, Alice sheds all his costumes and cries that "I want to wrap myself around my love" (no oblique reference to snakes intended) and that "what I am is what I am." He extols the virtues of sharing a bed with his woman while munching popcorn and viewing TV.

The musicianship present on *Lace and Whiskey* will dispel the doubts of critics who claim there is little substance behind Alice's stage antics. The majority of cuts on the album are hard, raucous rockers displaying intense energy and vitality, characterized by brisk piano solos by Alice. Various cuts commence with skillfully interwoven Procul Harum-like orchestration. The album's extensive supporting cast features Jim Gordon on drums and Al Kooper on piano. Kooper's influence is evident throughout, as female background vocals and even a choir adorn many of the selections.

Yes, the transformation seems complete and effective. Alice has undergone image surgery, changing himself from a demonic teen-leaser to a mature man, cherishing the love of a good woman and searching for simple values. He's come a long way from billion dollar babies to being your average multimillionaire homebody.

—Jeff Schwarz

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Books

CATCHING FIRE, by Wyatt Wyatt (New York: Random House, \$8.95).



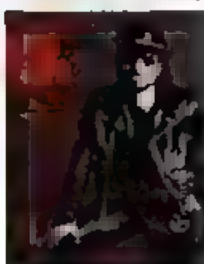
Norman Forman was caught in adultery in the mid-western college town where he grew up, and the irate husband squirted the guilty couple with lighter fluid and set them on fire. Norman's whole chest was badly burned, and at an Iowa hospital, they grafted pigskin onto his body, a routine procedure, but usually only a temporary one. Oddly, Norman's body accepted the graft, and after a while, there was no way you could tell—except for his lack of a navel—that it wasn't his own skin. The papers dubbed him the "pigman," and he, vowing chastity to avoid any further incidents, moved to Winter Park, Florida, to join his parents, who had been driven from their home by the scandal.

Forman rented a room in a house owned by two aged lesbians and spent a good part of his day at the pool of the Paradise Hotel—doctor's orders. To make money, he wrote canned sermons for a midwestern syndicate and spent the rest of the time fending off the advances of Spider, a beautiful deaf girl. Also around the Paradise pool were Offernel Farrington and Captain Smokes, the former 78 years old, and the latter a 91-year-old midget, both retired carnival workers and con men. Farrington was in love with Aleta Uzzel, the star alto in Norman's father's church choir, and the captain referred to himself in the third person. Then there was noseless Floyd, the hotel zoo keeper, and perfect Wendy Longbottom whom he loved.

The action is fast paced, hilarious and finally, terrifying, as a maniac with a gas can and plenty of matches threatens to blow Spider and her van all the way to Dade County.

Will Norman overcome his horrid memories of the fire? Will Captain Smokes ever get his \$2,000 funeral money back from Offernel Farrington? Who put the diarrhetic hog in Norman's room? And how will Floyd's new nose change Wendy's life? You'll just have to read *Catching Fire* to find out. It's not recommended for people whose skin grafts haven't taken yet, though—they'll literally split their sides. —Ed Ward

HARD CORPS: Studies in Leather and Sadomasochism, by Michael Grumley, with photographs by Ed Gallucci (New York: E.P. Dutton, \$6.95).



Galloping across the sexual frontier a length ahead of Anita Bryant is a tribe widely abused for abusing itself, but seldom heard. With *Hard Corps*, his ethnographical description of the new sadomasochism, Michael Grumley has done more than listen, he has infiltrated. Whatever his sexual politics, Grumley speaks not as a detached observer, but with the insight of an intimate.

If you are looking for advocacy here, you'll discover little Grumley neither condemns nor evangelizes. Sadomasochists are coming out of the closet like never before, but Grumley acknowledges those members of the hard corps who insist discretion is the better part of leather. Self-promotion helps garner public understanding, but it can dull the particular titillation that comes with S & M's very status as aberrant behavior. Nothing excites like the forbidden.

Grumley contends that sadomasochism is "an extension of normal [sexual] roles, not a perversion of them." Yet it is the cast, not the author, of *Hard Corps* that does the most to evoke empathy. They come off as average, almost dull people with remarkably normal lifestyles, who just happen to be slapping one another around at night on their way to orgasm. Ed Gallucci's photographs somehow make leather hoods, nipple clamps and motorcycle chains look like they belong on these folks who look like Linda Ronstadt and Sammy Davis, Jr.

By the end of the book, newcomers will find S & M less sinister than they may have expected. But Grumley warns that the slave must have an out, an escape word, an agreed-upon plea that will call off the whip. His concluding sentence is an admonition from within the tribe: "Know your limits." —Gary Putka

MORTAL ENGINES, by Stanislaw Lem, translated from the Polish and with an introduction by Michael Kandel (New York: Seabury Press, \$9.95).



Stanislaw Lem, where have you been all my life? In Poland, apparently. Poland, where the good art is. It should come as no surprise that this culture, which emerged from partition to become the universal butt of ethnicity, would also become the focus of the most universal intellectual ferment of our time.

Graphic images come to mind: Grotowski, whose guttural grunts are some-

how more eloquent in a language I don't know than anything in a language I do (Penderecki, the most apocalyptic modern composer of music; Kosinski, now rationalized by Yale Students, Polanski caught up in a spider web of archetypal intrigue).

Lem publishes here through a small press to a limited audience; elsewhere, his books sell in the millions. Italian, German and, for some reason, French books get here fast. Those in Swedish are smuggled in via smut or Bergman. Slavic languages and the rich South American literature take eras to arrive, if at all.

Mortal Engines is a collection of short fables too powerful and diverse to be adequately characterized in this short a slot. Suffice to say that the book is comparable to a collection of Borges, favorably comparable to a Calvino collection and worlds better than anything collectable by Barthelme. It is the eighth Lem book to be issued here by the Seabury Press. God bless 'em. —Michael Newman

THE BOOK OF GARLIC, by Lloyd J. Harris (New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, \$10).



A lively and scholarly labor of love, this work details garlic's use as food and medicine in nearly every culture since the Egyptian pyramid workers went on strike when the bulb supply failed. Talmudic Jews

ate a good dose of it on Friday to tap its aphrodisiac powers for traditional sabbath lovemaking. Warriors of many lands aped the gorillas who eat it raw for strength in battle. In many civilizations Harris traces a common theme: the lower classes used garlic as food and herb while the aristocracy turned up their noses at the peasant smell.

The stinking rose (actually a member of the lily family) is a prime example of modern science's rediscovery of herbal medicine. Though the results are still ignored by the AMA and FDA, researchers have confirmed many of garlic's ancient virtues. It kills disease germs and viruses, including many that wonder drugs can't touch. Garlic experimenters have successfully treated staph and strep infections, tuberculosis, colds, high blood pressure and cancer. It even makes a bug spray that kills crop pests without harming useful insects. Harris rightly knocks Western medicine's prejudice against gentle remedies and preventive care, but he never jumps to conclusions or descends to panacea-pushing polemics.

There are sections on growing garlic, cooking with it (try the 40-clove chicken with whole roasted garlics on the side) and some tidbits of garlic literature. But the book's ace is its metaphysical chapter. Discussion centers on tests showing that garlic, onions and ginseng emit mitogene-



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tic ultraviolet waves (M rays), which promote rejuvenation and cell growth, especially in the endocrine glands.

Having satisfied the scientific materialists in earlier pages, Harris proceeds to link these rays to prana, chi, orgones and other names for energies to be verified by future Nobel Prize winners. He attains his genuine huckster's goal—garlic becomes a symbol of the marriage of matter and spirit. It exemplifies the unity of all life and all energies. It is the emblem of humanity's rediscovery of its visionary roots.

—Gary Stimmel

INCREDIBLE! by Kevin McFarland (New York: Signet, \$1.75). Incredible is the word



for this entertaining illustrated collection of physical feats, nature's freaks and carnival geeks. Did you hear the one about P.T. Barnum's Caterpillar Man, an armless and legless torso who could roll a joint with his teeth? Or

how about Charles Charlesworth, who grew whiskers and reached sexual maturity at the age of four, had white hair and wrinkles by age six and died of old age at seven? Or the one about the fish who climbs trees? Or how about Jean François Grandet, known as Blondin because of his flowing golden locks, who crossed Niagara Falls on a tightrope, at different times blindfolded, on stilts, riding a bicycle, pushing a wheelbarrow, carrying his manager piggyback and cooking an egg on a portable stove? Or President James Garfield, who could write Latin with one hand while writing Greek with the other?

Yet *Incredible!* is not your everyday book of oddities. Treasures abound even for the jaded freakophile who has already read every Ripley's *Believe It or Not* paperback, has seen every one of David Frost's *Guinness Book of World Records* television specials or has watched *Tod Browning's Freaks* 112 times.

Not all eccentric inventors were saints. Cranky Austrian Karl Waelzel invented a machine that could play 378 instruments simultaneously, "not to produce beautiful music, but for the purpose of annoying noisy courtiers of his royal household." More intriguing is freaky sex among freaks: Chang and Eng, the original Siamese twins, would spend three days of the week with Chang's wife and three with Eng's. "What they did on the seventh day," says McFarland, "the Lord only knows." We're left to guess the secret sex rituals of the Berber queen Kahena's 400-husband harem or of the Greek monk who never met a woman he didn't like—because he never met a woman. The ultimate question: For all of McFarland's fascination with freakology, would he want his sister to marry a one-eyed midget with three legs?

—Renee Bordereau

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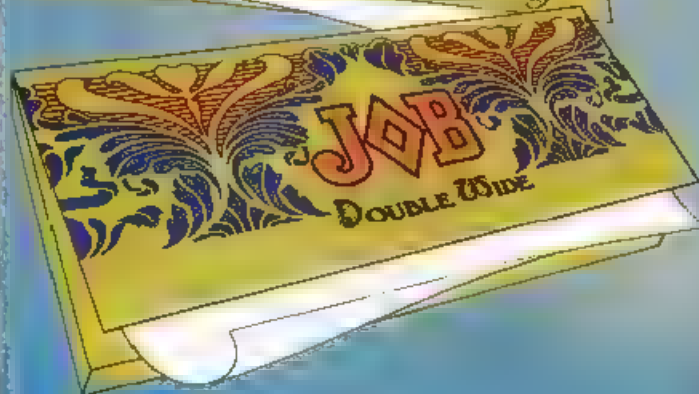
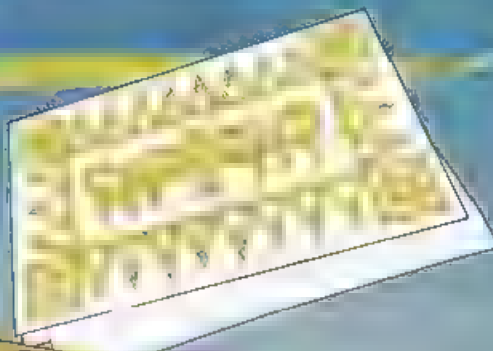
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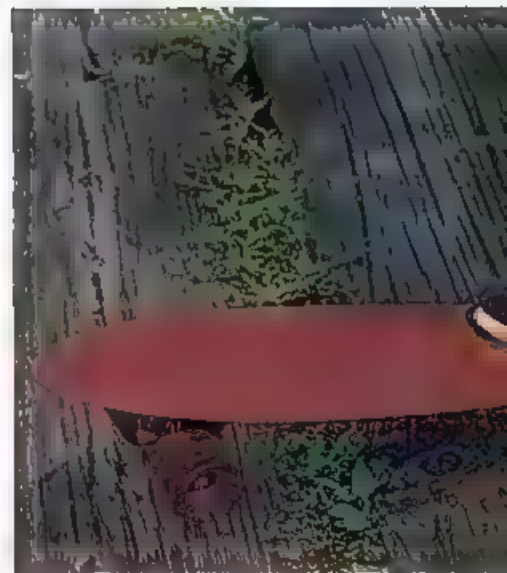


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5 Adidas leather country running shoes.



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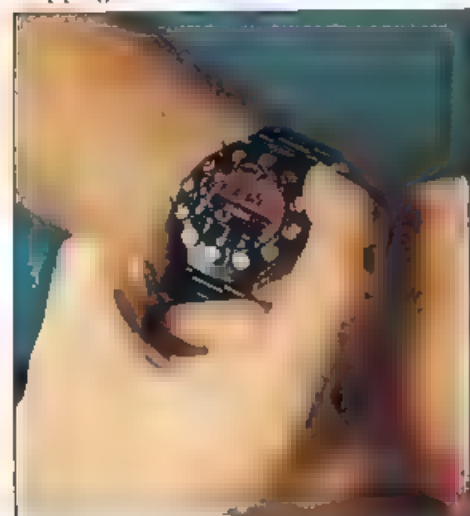
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High Style

Hour Power

If your local supplier's the sort who's always late for an important rendezvous and adds three ounces to four ounces and charges you for nine, you might think of presenting him or her with the Calculator-Wrist Watch. The watch provides time, date and second countdown, but what sets it apart from the typical timepiece is its nifty ability to add, subtract, divide and multiply. The calculator accommodates up to eight digits, has a floating decimal and is rechargeable. It's all a matter of knowing which button controls which function, but learn your lesson well or you'll be paying half-past-seven for a gram of coke. Manufactured by Uranus and distributed by Grass Roots, P.O. Box 729, Glen Cove, N.Y. 11542. It'll set you back \$199.50 plus \$5 for shipping and insurance.



Just Add Water and Serve

The Rain Pot is a must for vacationers and just plain forgetful plant lovers. It feeds and waters naturally; never too much, never too little. The garden-bright, decorator-styled inner pot nestles in a clear styrene plastic outer watering container so you can see the water level at a glance and only need to refill once a month. No more apologizing to your droopy wilted plants when you get back from that vacation! Sizes get bigger depending on whether you send \$3, \$5, or \$7 to Plantcraft, 79 Wall Street, Suite 501, New York, N.Y. 10005.



Secret Squares

Mark Birmingham turns your pipe dreams into a work of art with his customized inlaid-wood stash boxes, each one specially designed to hold pipes, tooters, cutting slabs, vials, mirrors, razors and whatever else your fancy fancies in more secret compartments than an Egyptian tomb. Only you and the gods know where



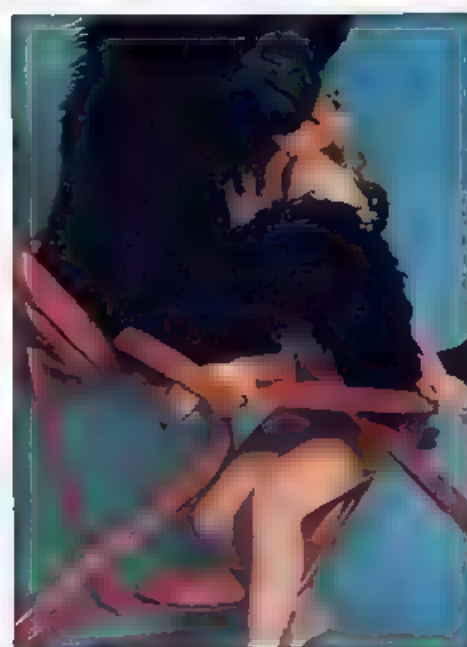
your stash is. These portable headshops are available in over 100 types of rare wood and a large variety of inlay materials including ivory, jasper, abalone and mother-of-pearl. Prices range from \$60 to \$200 depending on size and materials used. For information, write Birmingham Productions, P.O. Box 1189, Fort Collins, Colo. 80522.

Is This Seat Taken?

If you're tired of going to bed with men, women and perfect strangers, you'll go ape over the Love Chair, which lets you go to chair with them instead. A labyrinth of steel tubing with backrest and seat, the Love Chair gives armchair acrobats a free ride to the parts they left out of the Kama Sutra. Throw away that truss for only \$690, from Shelter Designs, Lexington Ave. and East 81st St., New York, N.Y. 10028 or rent it for a weekend workout for \$100 (deductible from the price if you decide to buy).



David Oliver



"High Style" spotlights the latest accouterments of the high life, including playthings, paraphernalia, instruments of pleasure, gadgets for your work and for your home—anything that adds zest and style to your day. If you know of an item that should be reviewed in this department, please send it to the High Style editor ■

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Where have you been? In stir? On the road? Or just plain dull? If you don't own a complete set of High Times, the Magazine of High Society, you are more or less out to lunch. More or less depending on how many magazines your collection lacks. What did you miss? Our greatest hits, and lots more.

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Closers

Whence "Elaine's"?

The considerable public response to the first three parts of "Murder at Elaine's," our opium-tinged, literary-world thriller, has led us to ask author George R. Boz to prepare a double-sized fourth part, which for space reasons will appear here next month. When pressed for clues as to the identity of the murderer, Boz would only promise the return of the sinister literary pimp in the green Bentley who will play some devastating eavesdropped tapes. "You could call it a literary Watergate," said Boz.



Feds and Heads

Lucy Vance and Julian Harrison worked together closely to con the government into giving them our feature on the "Federal Reefer Rolling Factory" in Piedmont, North Carolina. Lucy, the photographer, works for the state of North Carolina but plans to become a full-time, freelance photojournalist. "Shooting this sequence was a real challenge," she recalls, "not only because of the varying but equally drab places we were in, but also because of the marijuana dust. If I hadn't had to get out and clean lenses frequently, I would have suffocated!"



Harrison is an English photographer who has settled down in North Carolina to climb rocks and make statements like the following: "The manufacture of marijuana cigarettes by the Research Triangle Institute for the federal government is merely a novel facet of the Institute's marijuana research program. The metabolic rate of ingested marijuana is what they're really interested in. Where does Delta 9 finally end up—what happens and why? In considering favorable legislation concerning federal decriminalization, you can be sure the research conducted here at RTI will have a direct, perhaps crucial, influence."

The Gringo Trail

Couple months back, our national correspondent A. Craig Copetas got a mysterious invitation to go to Washington. "He's dead," snapped the ace reporter. Turned out *High Times'* news sleuth was wanted to squire First Lady Roz Carter on her tour of the U.S.A.'s fascist Latin allies in South America. Copetas talked at great length with Rosalynn about Peruvian affairs and had a close brush with the Bolivian law. Tour cocaine fields and factories, learn the Carter stand on nose candy in the next *High Times*.

Liquid Assets

Craig Pyes was the co-founder and editor of *SunDance Magazine* and program director of KPFA Pacifica Radio in Berkeley before leaving the United States to live in Mexico. He is currently working on a nonfiction book about life behind the lines of Mexico's drug war, sketching notes for a novel and eating mangoes. Craig is considered one of the foremost experts on "Absinthe," believing it quite safe. Scholars continue to debate whether he arrived at this position before or after wormwood rolled his brain.



Phos Fiend

Pete Kaldheim, our expert on "Phosphenes," is a writer whose first collection of fiction, *The Michael Stories*, was published last spring by Cooper Union University. "Technically, phosphenes are what you see

when you close your eyes real tight," Kaldheim essentializes. "However, it now appears to be what you see when you have them open, and even more so when you're tripping. Switch to hyperspace. Get the picture? Beam me up, Scotty." ☐

COCOBOLO

The exciting brilliance of richly colored COCOBOLO is captured in this exclusive line of hand finished smoking accessories. From a collection of beautifully designed hand pipes and bongs, to a variety of stash containers, all unparalleled in wood selection and hand craftsmanship.



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